INSIDE: ANOTHER PRESENTATION SUPPLEMENT

HORNBLOWER—COMPLETE NEW NOVELETTE

Week ending October 3 1953 Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

GILBERT HARDING'S Life Story

This week: They try to teach me discipline—and fail

NEW!

The Sensational REMINGTON 60

ELECTRIC DRY SHAVER

For the first time in shaving history the sixty second shave is possible. You may not want to shave that fast, but 50 men, under supervision, shaved for ten days with the new Remington 60 and averaged 54 seconds per shave. The two new, extra long shaving heads are mounted on the exclusive Remington Contour principle, slightly arched to fit easily into those hard-to-shave spots. Regular Model 210-250v. AC/DC. Dual Volt Model 110-150v and 190-250v. AC/DC.

For the Perfectionist. Ask for Remington Pre Shave and After Shave Lotions and Powder Stick.

The Sixty Second Shaving Marvel!

Remington Rand Ltd., 1-19 New Oxford Street, W.C.1.

don't take cold...
take
CROOKES!
Just one capsule a day—Taken regularly, Crookes Halibut Oil will help you to resist colds and 'flu. It is rich in 'protective' Vitamin A and 'sunshine' Vitamin D. From chemists only, 25 for 2/6, 100 for 8/6.
CROOKES HALIBUT OIL

RHEUMATISM ATTACKS YOUNG AS WELL AS OLD

ACCOUNTANT (49) | **WIDOW (73)**

Photograph posed by model

Recent photograph of Mrs. Codling

BOTH SAY

Rheumatic Pain relieved by Fynnon

These stories—two of many—tell of the wonderful relief rheumatic sufferers are receiving from Fynnon Salt.

Mr. M., 49 year old accountant of Manchester (who for professional reasons does not wish his name or photograph published) writes: 'In May 1950 I was suddenly attacked with . . . Sciatica and Lumbago . . . Months of agony, with only occasional relief . . . I finally tried Fynnon Salt with amazing relief. Towards the end now of the second tin I am free of all pain . . . I can walk and sit and bend in comfort . . . and feel ten years younger.'

Mrs. C. Codling, of Birmingham, widow of 73, has also found relief from rheumatic pain through taking Fynnon Salt regularly: 'I have been taking Fynnon Salt since I was 60 years old for rheumatism, and now I am 73 years old and still at work . . . And I can thoroughly recommend it, which I have done to many of my friends.'

(The originals of these two letters can be seen at our offices).

Modern scientific findings on rheumatism show that it occurs most among the over 65's, but that it often starts between 25-45 and that improper elimination of waste matter from the body frequently contributes to it. Doctors agree that the time to check rheumatism is when the first twinges occur.

How Fynnon can help

Fynnon makes a two-way attack on impurities.

1. It is an effective but gentle aperient, using body fluid filtered through intestinal tissues to rid the system of waste matter.
2. It is a diuretic, flushing the kidneys and reducing impurities in the blood—approved treatment for many rheumatic conditions. Take a teaspoonful of Fynnon first thing in the morning, in water or tea. You, too, will find marked relief. *But, if you are seriously worried about your condition, don't fail to consult your doctor.*

FYNNON SALT

LARGE TIN 2/4½

For the relief of Rheumatism and the kindred complaints of Neuritis, Sciatica, Lumbago and Fibrositis.

FYNNON LIMITED, BRENTFORD, MIDDLESEX

If only he could see it....

From his viewpoint he is quite immaculate, but to everybody he meets he is a very untidy fellow indeed. What he can't see is the seedy sprinkling of dandruff on the back of his well-cut jacket. It ruins his appearance and threatens the health of his hair. There is *one* treatment that would help him . . . Dr. Page Barker's Scurf and Dandruff Lotion has been widely recommended by pharmacists and hairdressers for many years now, and excellent results have continued to increase its sales. Ask for Dr. Page Barker's Scurf and Dandruff Lotion at all chemists and hairdressers. 3/2d per bottle. Large size 4/4d.

For a complete treatment use also
DR. PAGE BARKER'S D.43 SHAMPOO

EDITORIAL

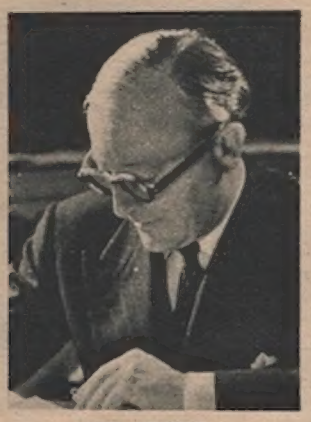
New for old

NINE of the luckiest families in Great Britain live in Nos. 49 to 57 Southsea Road, Croydon, and Nos. 38 to 44 Alliance Street, Stockton-on-Tees.

These houses were recently bought by two firms of ironfounders to show that the eight million houses built before 1914 can have the same facilities as new ones.

For an average of £232, they have been given brand-new bathrooms, lavatories, new stoves for heating, cooking and constant hot water.

LIKE 5,435,700 other housewives out of the 14,480,500 in the country, Mrs. Braithwaite of Stockton and Mrs. Pitts of Croydon previously had no proper bath. They each had only one cold water tap, and that was in the kitchen.



MR. WREN
Proving the difficulty . . .

When an ancient house like No. 55 Southsea Road can be bought for £142 and with the expenditure of £163 be made equal in structure and amenities to a new £1,500 house, it might be expected that there would be at least as many conversions as new buildings—particularly as local councils are authorized to finance half.

But Mr. W. T. Wren, a director of the Stockton ironfounders and originator of the project, says: "Only three thousand improvement grants have been applied for in the four years since the scheme started, against 874,678 new houses. Landlords simply cannot do it economically."

UNDER the Rent Restriction Acts a landlord can raise the annual rent by eight per cent of the value of the work done if he finances it all himself. Or he can apply for the local council to pay half, and can then increase the rent by six per cent of the money he spends.

But with the increased tax, capital recovery and additional maintenance, he will be lucky to see a clear one and a half per cent return on his investment. He can do twice as well with Defence Bonds at three per cent.

If his tenants still have no piped water (810,500 households), no cooking stove (334,100), no kitchen sink (905,200), or no water closet (1,114,500), it is not always fair to blame him.

IT is obvious that either a substantial increase must be permitted in rents, or local councils should have the right to make loans to landlords at a low rate of interest.

Until the law is changed so that one of these incentives is available, hundreds of thousands of houses will continue to crumble away.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

AGES before they came to Britain, chrysanthemums were grown in China. Fifty years ago there were only four colours. Now there are dozens of shades and variations. But a pretty girl in a new floral hat can easily outshine even the most exquisite bloom at the flower show. The mixture of admiration and envy on the face of "the other woman" in John Haseltine's painting has nothing at all to do with chrysanthemums.

NO NEED TO CLEAR THE ROOM

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Goodlass Wall & Co. Ltd. 179/185 (DIO) Great Portland St. W.1. Est 1840

A book you can't buy . . .

. . . the dramatic eye-witness account of SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S most daring exploit, the *Raid on the Spanish Treasure Trains*, a stirring tale of high adventure in true Elizabethan spirit, of cities captured by a handful of men, of ambush and peril, of hardship in tropical forests, and of a loot worth about half a million pounds!

The Folio Society's special edition of this dramatic story in a superb buckram binding with brilliant new wood-engravings by Geoffrey Wales is NOT FOR SALE, but is being sent as a *free gift* to all Members joining for the coming year.

YOU, too, can be a member, the proud possessor of a library of the world's greatest books in fine editions, because, the demand being guaranteed, these beautiful volumes, illustrated by famous artists, craftsman-printed on fine paper, and richly bound in colourful materials cost no more than many ordinary books.

But DO NOT DELAY, Membership is perforce limited, and *a few vacancies only* exist for the new series. Complete the coupon NOW and hand to your bookseller: in difficulty, post to

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Patent No. 587049

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See the Leytool Hand Drill at your local tool shop. Conveniently compact and beautifully engineered. Makes drilling an effortless pleasure. Requires no oiling—no exertion.

Write for illustrated booklet describing this and other interesting Leytools.

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JOHN BULL 189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1

OCTOBER 3, 1953 VOL. 94 NO. 2466 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

FREE SPEECH

Problems of a man and his beard

EVER since I began shaving, I have hated the operation. The more trouble I take over it, the worse job I make. But, for me, there is no alternative.

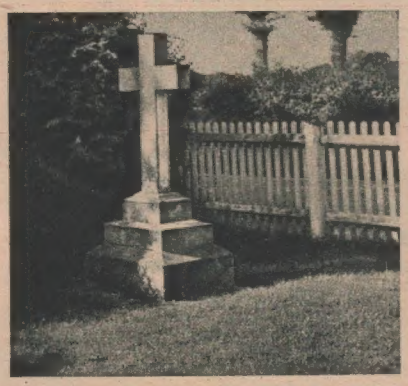
A few months ago, after attending an important conference covered in scars and patches, I decided that there was only one solution to my problem. I grew a beard. For a week or so I sensed a degree of amusement, not unmixed with admiration, among my staff. I persisted, and was rather pleased with the result. I calculated that I saved myself five minutes in the bathroom every morning—and much pain and vexation. Now my beard has gone—my wife refused to go out with me unless I shaved it off. After discussing the incident with sympathetic friends, I have concluded that there are many men who would much prefer to go bearded. But their wives say no.—G. V. T., Liverpool.

Tusk To Tooth

AFTER spending six hours one week-end vainly touring London in search of a dentist to replace a filling, I decided to do a temporary job myself. I powdered a piece of elephant tusk—ivory carving is my hobby—and mixed it with a little boracic powder. I bound the mixture with spirit gum. My dentistry was quite effective; I could even tackle the Sunday joint. —R. H. C., London, N.W.6.

Stone At The Inn

MY photograph of this tomb-stone was not taken in a quiet churchyard, but in the garden of an old country



inn, the George and Dragon, at Dragon's Green, near Shipley in Sussex.—J. R., Co. Durham.

The inscription on the stone reads: "In loving memory of Walter, the albino son of Alfred and Charlotte Budd. Born February 12, 1867. Died February 18, 1893. May God forgive those who forgot their duty to him who was just and afflicted." It appears that Walter, who suffered from occasional epileptic fits, drowned himself when wrongly suspected of petty theft. The stone was erected on his grave in Shipley churchyard, but the vicar of the day ordered its removal.

A Suffolk Garden

THERE are many ways of making good use of old age ("Free Speech," September 26). I know a man who has created a lovely garden at his Suffolk home. Rockeries, shrubs and beds of flowers border his large, velvety lawn. Sweet peas and roses grow among the vegetables. There are blooms in the conservatory throughout the year. Visitors are welcomed at any time; they may play games or wander where they will. Chairs are provided for the old and a swing to amuse the young.—MRS. M. A., Suffolk.

Modern English

AS part of our English course my class at Larvik High School read Agatha Christie's exciting story *After The Funeral*, which appeared in JOHN BULL as a serial. It was a very interesting experiment which taught us a lot of modern English. The language of most of our English reading books is rather old-fashioned, stiff and precise.—KARL MOLBACH, Norway.

Escape By Water

LIKE Fred Carter, whose work as a pest officer was described in JOHN BULL, I once saw a rabbit swim. It was during the war, when the oil tanker in which I was a deck officer was anchored in a loch in Argyllshire. Returning along the narrow ledge of rock which served as a path to our landing stage, I surprised a rabbit which had been licking salt deposit from the tide-washed rocks. My arrival cut off its way of retreat so, after some hesitation, it leaped into the smooth salt water. As it swam past me I noticed that its eyes were dilated with fear. But it reached the beach, and the last I saw of it was a white tail disappearing into the brambles.—ALAN WHITFIELD, Archer Road, Sunderland.

. . . Some years ago, as a "new chum" jackaroo in Australia, I was sent with two boys to fumigate a large rabbit warren. After spending the morning sealing the bolt-holes, we pumped in the gas and sat down for lunch. A little later I was amazed to see hordes of rabbits—their siesta disturbed by our roving dogs—dashing from a nearby wood and trying to enter their burrows. The boys had not told me that Australian rabbits "sleep out" during the morning heat.—G. HEENEY, London, S.W.10.

Outdoor Births

I HAVE just seen a cow give birth to a calf in the field adjoining my home. It was the third calf to be born there during the past few months, and on each occasion there was no one present to give help if it was needed.—MRS. J. S., Hants.

Where a man has a good-quality herd, ample buildings and plenty of labour, he will probably prefer to take the cow inside, says an official of the Ministry of Agriculture. But farmers often allow their cows to calve in the fields, unless the weather is very bad.

No Compulsion

NOW that the compulsion is removed I greatly enjoy some subjects at which I was hopeless at school. I very much disliked needlework, handicrafts and art, but now I make slippers, shirts, nightdresses, and needlecases. Conversely, although maths were my strong point at school my monthly accounts now drive me to despair.—MRS. M. L., Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire.

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Continued on page 6

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Continued on page 6

Add a *colourful* touch of History to Your Home

Complete kit of parts for only 17/8

BUILD A MODEL of the galleon 'ELIZABETH JONAS'

A beautiful 16-in. model of a ship of the times of Queen Elizabeth I would look well in any home. The kit (No. 2095) contains all necessary wood, sail material, rigging, turned guns, full size plans and detailed instructions. There are many other Hobbies Galleon Kits too—all equally good value for money. For example there's the miniature galleon 'Mary Fortune', one of the first ships of the Royal Navy. The complete kit (No. 2914) costs only 4/9. Others are shown in Hobbies Free Booklet, and details of all Hobbies Kits and tools are contained in the 1954 Handbook. Use the form below and receive your kit by post. Also obtainable from Ironmongers and stores. Or from Hobbies Branches in London, Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, Southampton and Bristol. All Hobbies kits are easily made with the help of a few simple fretwork tools.

HOBBIES WEEKLY
out every Wednesday, is full of illustrated articles on making models, toys and many things of use in the home. A large design (worth 9d. or 1/-) is given free every fortnight. Get a copy through your newsagent or Hobbies Stockist, price 4d.

Hobbies

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Please send me your Free 20-page 2-colour Booklet and name and address of nearest stockist. Also send me items I have marked thus x.

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'Lightning' zips are by far the most practical fastening for your trousers. What's more they keep your trousers trim from every angle. Make sure your next pair is fitted with reliable 'Lightning'—the name's on the slider pull.

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LF 129

FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

diet which was a gastronomical nightmare. I was given four repulsive meals a day, and at the end of three weeks I had gained two pounds. Afterwards, making my own commonsense selections from a normal diet and, within reason, eating what I fancied, I took off two pounds a week.—R. P., Surrey.

Roving Marrow

A. E. BEARD'S cartoon (JOHN BULL, September 12) could serve as a picture of my own marrow plant. After starting six fine marrows, it grew backwards through the chestnut paling into the neighbouring garden, where it pushed through a row of carrots and began another family.—MRS. D. S., West Green, Crawley, Sussex.

. . . Like the cartoon cat (JOHN BULL, September 5), my pet "helps" in the garden. When I planted some anemone corms last year he followed behind me, digging them up and carrying them away. I chased him off and replanted, but he must have got to work again later. There was a nice show of anemones by the coal shed and none in the border.—MRS. A. N., London, S.E.25.

Man In Demand

I HAVE been amused by the "Free Speech" letters from readers who find that people try to take advantage of their specialist knowledge. As a telephone engineer, I am called upon to fit light and power points and to repair radios, electric irons, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and even television sets. The requests for assistance come from neighbours, friends, and even from the friends of friends—people quite unknown to me. I enjoy doing the jobs, but it is not a money-making sideline. For my services I am usually given a packet of cigarettes.—W. P., London, S.E.22.

Improbable

GERALD FANCETT'S cover (JOHN BULL, September 12) depicted an amusing but highly improbable situation. No self-respecting milkman would add further bottles every day to the line-up on the doorstep. No baker would pile up loaves at the back door. The traditionally sharp-witted paper-boy would not continue his deliveries *ad infinitum*. Holidays—or foul play—would soon have been suspected, and appropriate inquiries made.—MRS. NANNETTE MCNEIL, Hampshire.

Boy Or Girl

I WAS interested to read of the theory ("Free Speech," September 12) that the children of a marriage are likely to take the sex of the dominant partner. It is my belief that, whatever their sex, the children will favour the stronger personality in their looks.—M. C., Edinburgh.

. . . In most families the first child, whether it is a boy or a girl, will take after the father in its appearance.—MRS. B. G., Newcastle upon Tyne.

. . . When the wife is the dominant personality the children are boys. Where the husband is the stronger they are girls. Equally matched partners have mixed families.—K. R., Perthshire.

The personalities of the parents have no effect at all on the sex of their children, says a doctor.

Old Are Best

MY advice to a boy who wishes to learn carpentry is to look out for old tools offered for sale by a craftsman retiring from the trade. In my opinion, many of the tools of today have not the quality of those of fifty years ago. If an old chisel and a new one are sharpened and used on a hard wood like oak, it will be found that the old chisel will take a keener edge and retain it for longer.—R. S., Gloucester.

Warm Days

ON a warm September day, I noticed a number of empty nutshells lying in the corner of a nearby garden. My neighbour told me that it was a sign of good weather; he remembered an old country saying, "When the squirrel eats nuts on the tree, the weather's as warm as warm can be."—MRS. K. R., Gloucestershire.

Post By Bus

THERE is an evening bus leaving St. Andrews which carries a post-box to collect mail in the countryside between Kinross and Stirling. As the bus travels along the country roads,

farmers, shepherds, gamekeepers and the villagers meet it to post their letters. At Stirling the box is removed by a postman and taken to the post office.—J. MCINTOSH, Greenock, Renfrewshire.

This post bus passes through Muckhart, Dollar, Tillicoultry, Alva and Menstrie, adds a Scottish official of the Post Office. The service is for letters and postcards only. A similar scheme is operated in the Aberfoyle area.

Midget Adrift

AS a former member of the crew of the salvage vessel H.M.S. Tedworth, I have enjoyed reading of the work of the midget submarines in your series, *Above Us The Waves*. I shall never forget the day when a midget parted her tow at the end of the middle watch. There was a good sea running when we went out in the sea-boat to rescue her. In order to secure a new tow, one seaman had to ride on the midget's bows like a cowboy. Because of the tide the sea-boat could not get back to the ship and we had to pull the full length of Loch Ryan.—A. T., Long Eaton, Nottinghamshire.

The concluding instalment of "Above Us The Waves" begins on page 31.

Things You Hear

WALKING past a radar station I heard a buzzing sound through my National Health Service hearing aid. It was rather like the noise made by a child blowing short blasts on a toy tin trumpet. My wife, who has exceptionally keen hearing, heard nothing.—A. M., Liversedge, Yorkshire.

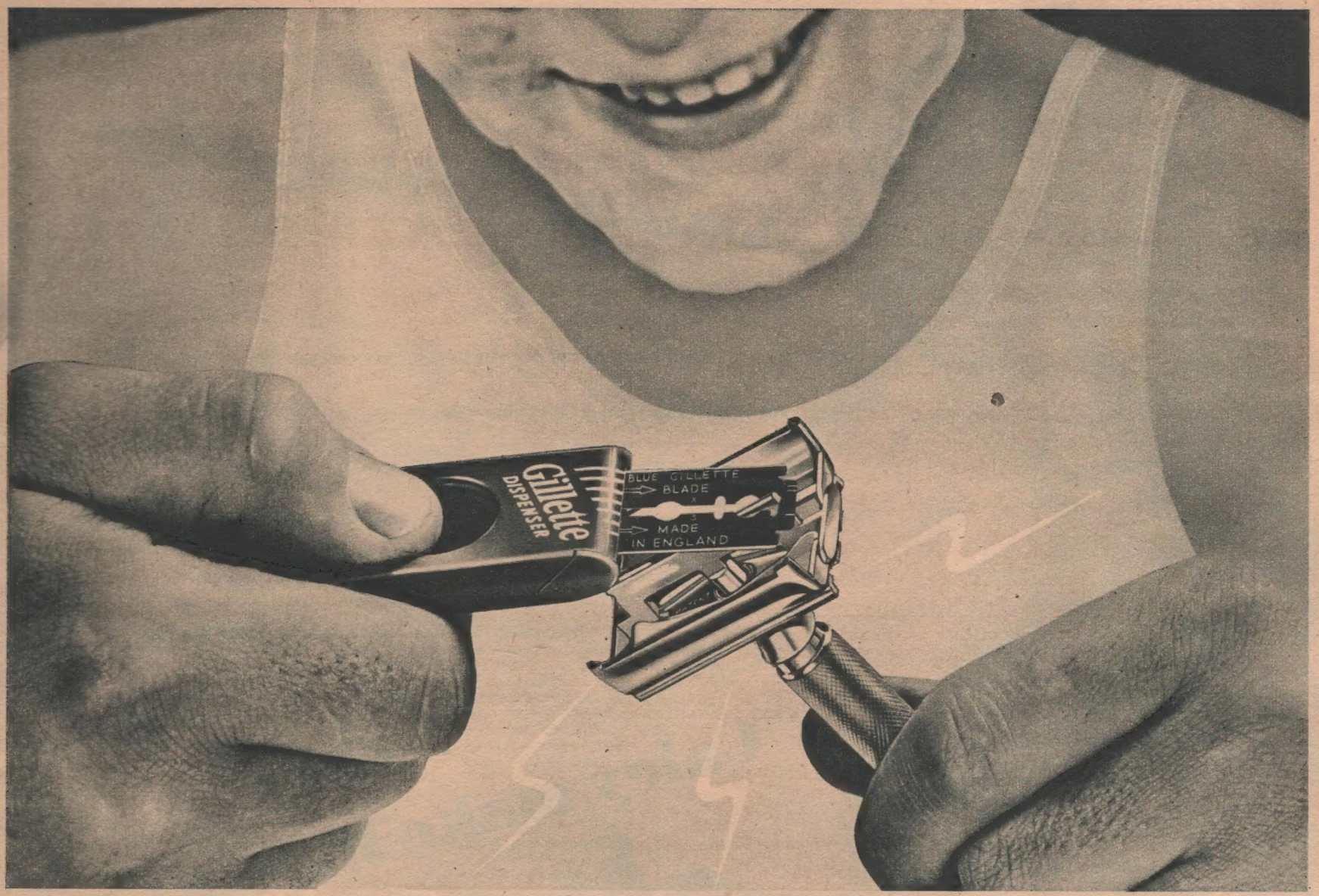
It is quite possible that the microphone of the hearing aid picked up the sound of the radar beam, says an Air Ministry official. This sound is not within the range of the human ear.

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

SPIDER MEN WHO BUILD TV MASTS

by JOHN MAY

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.



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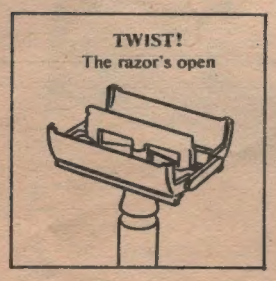

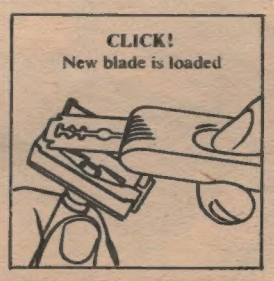

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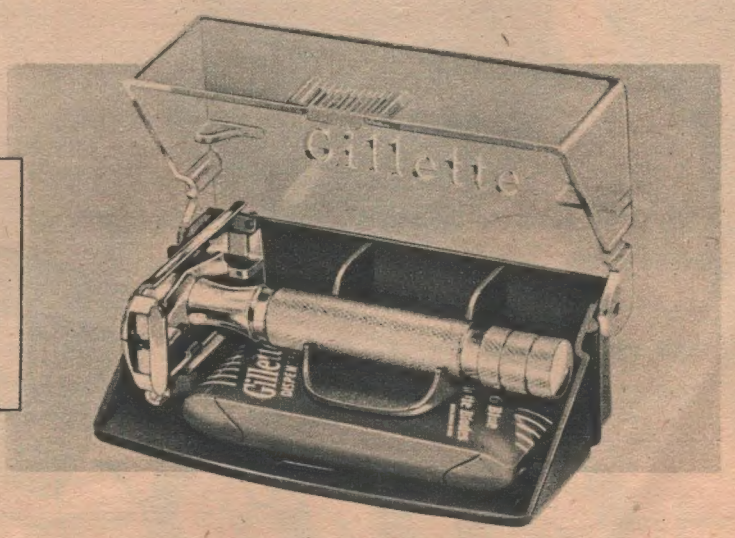

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DR 2

Above the din, he could hear Patsy shouting as the dogs went into the final stretch. He held his breath, knowing what would happen if he lost

Miss Patsy to win

by ***FRANK TILSLEY***

Five winners in a row! He just had to win again. There was two pounds on for Patsy—and thirty pounds of the firm's money, too

THE PHONE BEGAN TO RING as Alfie hung his coat in the big shed. Sam Ogle, getting into his overalls, jerked his head to the office door. "Nobody there yet, Alfie. Answer it." Sam wasn't the foreman, but he had enough bounce—a big, swaggering chap of twenty-five.

Alfie went into the deserted office, picked up the receiver. "T. H. Cookson, Limited. Coal and Haulage."

A woman's voice asked if Mr. Cookson had arrived yet. "This is Mrs. Stevens. Is that Alfie? I'm afraid my husband's got the 'flu. He's had a terrible night. . . ."

Alfie made sympathetic noises—Mr. Stevens was the manager. He promised to tell Mr. Cookson, and, as he put the phone down, the bell rang again—the Guv'nor himself, his voice harsh, blunt, commanding.

"Shan't be in today, Alfie—sudden call to London. Tell Mr. Stevens to get that unloading job done at——" He swore when Alfie told him the manager wouldn't be in. "Oh, all right. You'd better stay in the office, Alfie, till he comes back. You won't have any keys to open the safe, so don't bank until the last minute. . . ."

Alfie put down the phone, delighted. He'd been office boy for two years before going into the yard. If anything turned up he couldn't handle, he'd ask Miss Patsy, who worked in the order office, on the other side of the glass door. The order office didn't open until nine, so she hadn't arrived yet.

ILLUSTRATED BY ALFRED SEYMOUR

Alfie looked forward to the arrival of Miss Patsy—ardently. Ever since she had come to work here, six months before, he had taken every feasible opportunity to talk to her.

He didn't think of himself as being in love. At eighteen, he knew that Miss Patsy, an attractive young woman of twenty, lived in a world beyond his range: a world of dances in evening dress, cocktails at the Hampton

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All these novels are certain best-sellers—and for all of them we have had to fight intense competition from other magazines and newspapers seeking the right to publish them for the first time. They will be followed by others of the same calibre—details will be announced later. For our policy is to get the best fiction written today—and to keep JOHN BULL the liveliest, most readable magazine in Britain.

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HORNBLOWER OF THE ATROPOS

IN this week's issue we publish *Hornblower And The Nelson Touch*. Next week we begin the brilliant sequel—a full-length novel entitled *Hornblower Of The Atropos*.

C. S. Forester has never written a better tale. For here is young Horatio Hornblower setting sail in his first independent command: H.M.S. Atropos, sloop, twenty-two guns. His destination and mission are secret. And on board he carries the King's nephew.

Before he has reached his destination, he is a very puzzled man. For, under Admiralty orders, he has to ship at Gibraltar a taciturn Scot and three mysterious Ceylonese.

It is not until he meets Admiral Collingwood that he learns why—or what his mission is. It is a mission fantastic even for Hornblower. . . .

Dive, and back stall seats at the cinema. Alfie dreamed of going in the stalls with Miss Patsy, though he never expected he would.

Sam made fun of him. "She's only stringing you along, you silly little blighter. She's laughing at you, really, if you'd the sense to see it."

Alfie hoped, passionately, that whoever Miss Patsy finally fell in love with, it wouldn't be Sam. He told himself, anxiously, that Sam didn't stand a chance. He had noted some of the men who called for Miss Patsy from time to time. Men with cars, some of them—a cut above Sam. Even Mr. Michaelis had taken her out once. Mr. Michaelis was a business friend of the Guv'nor's. He smoked cigars and ran a big, shining Cadillac, and had interests in half the businesses in Barton, they said, including the Barton Greyhound Stadium.

Miss Patsy arrived ten minutes late and gave Alfie a smile which made him breathe heavily for the next half hour. He watched her, furtively, throughout an uneventful morning and made every possible excuse to go into the order office. She was small, even by Alfie's standards, with dark, swinging hair, and eyes which melted every bone in your body when she smiled. She gave him a particularly dazzling smile when he was getting the bank ready after lunch.

"I'm just slipping round to Evelyn's," she said—Evelyn's was the hairdresser's, round the corner. "I'm going out tonight, and I want them to fit me in at half past five."

Alfie was going to suggest she should phone, but as he looked into her face he forgot what he wanted to say. "I've got to be at the bank at three."

She laughed. She had a very special laugh. Alfie could have recognized it anywhere, even in the dark. "I'll be back," she promised. She slipped into her coat, waved. The door-bell clanged. Alfie went to the window, quickly, and watched her walk up the station approach and out of sight.

He went back to the desk, entered up the bankings—cheques, and sixty pounds in notes—and waited. Five minutes passed. Ten minutes. Alfie went to the window again, checked the time with the station clock. Eight minutes to three. Seven minutes to three. He went to the phone, dialled the number of the hairdresser's shop. A languid voice repeated his question. Miss Patsy? Oh—Patsy Morgan! Yes, she'd just left.

ALFIE banged down the receiver with a sigh of relief, grabbed the paying-in book. Five minutes to three. He could just do it, if he ran.

Here she was, smiling her apology with arched eyebrows. Alfie opened the door as a van drew up—and he rushed into the arms of Michaelis's driver. He tried to free himself. "Can't stop——"

The bigger man grabbed his arm. "Not so fast, Alfie. The Guv'nor in?"

"No, and I'm in a hurry!"

"So'm I. So's Mr. Michaelis—he's going down to the coast. He says make sure Mr. Cookson gets this today." He felt in his pocket, produced a thick envelope.

Alfie grabbed it and ran, his eye on the clock. Only three minutes to go! Just one chance—the bus, now moving out of the station approach: the bank was the first stop. Alfie jumped on. If only the traffic lights were at green. . . . They moved to red as the bus turned towards them.

Alfie came back, not too disconsolate. The Guv'nor attached extraordinary importance to bulky envelopes from Mr. Michaelis. Alfie suspected he would accept his excuse. He sat down at the desk and pondered. He daren't leave the money here: there were no keys to lock it up. He'd better keep it in his pocket, his breast pocket, where it would be safe. As for the letter, he'd better open it—suppose something needed to be done, today? Better be told

"You silly little fool!" she snarled at him. "Don't you try and implicate *me!*" There was contempt in her eyes, and something else, too—fear

off for doing something wrong than for doing nothing at all.

He ripped open the envelope and took out several pages of typed flimsy—simply a report of a meeting of the local chamber of commerce: uninteresting. But clipped to the front page was a sheet of expensive notepaper, blank except for a row of figures written in ink—figures and question-marks: 2. 1. ? 1. 5. 3. ? 3. 1.

Alfie stared at the paper, intrigued. This, he felt in his bones, was something important. Yet what? Some sort of code? The combination of a safe? Certainly not this safe! Anyway, there was nothing he could do. He opened a drawer, changed his mind. Better keep these papers with the money. He slid them into his inside-pocket; then he went quietly over to the glass door and peeped at Miss Patsy, jotting down an order. He stayed watching her until the phone recalled him to duty.

THE day was nearly over; through the window, Alfie could see the lorries coming back into the yard. The glass door opened, and in came Miss Patsy, smiling.

"I'm going to the hairdresser's now, Alfie—it's 5.15 and I promised to get there before half past. Watch the phone for me, won't you?"

"Yes, Miss Patsy." Anxiety to do her a service struggled with a reluctance to see her go. He made an excuse to go to the door, to watch her out of sight. Then he went back to the order office. The phone rang. He picked up the receiver and a pencil, expecting an order. But the voice was familiar.

"This is Sam—Patsy there?"

"Sam! Aren't you in the yard——?"

"I'm at the depot—and we're going to be here till midnight, by the look of things. But don't stand there jabbering. Where's Patsy?"

"She's gone." Alfie, cherishing the secret, didn't say where: that was something he knew about Patsy which Sam didn't.

Sam swore. "We were going to the dogs, and now, of course, I can't make it. How the thunder am I going to let her know?"

Alfie kept the elation from his voice. "I can get a message to her."

"Good boy, Alfie! Tell her about this unloading job. Tell her how sorry I am. Say I was frantic—that's the way to get round women—pile it on. Say I'm hoping she'll let me take her on Saturday. Okay?"

"Okay." Alfie put down the phone. He was locking up when the great idea hit him; he leaned for a minute against the office door, one arm extended to the top bolt. Suppose, by some chance, he missed her at the hairdresser's? He could go to her home—how grateful she'd be! And suppose he didn't go to her home straight away, but went home and had his tea first, so that he arrived just as she was coming out to meet Sam? If he said to her: *As a matter of fact, Miss Patsy, I'm going to the dogs myself. . . .* She'd go with him—surely?

Alfie shot the bolt, trembling, went through the outer door, and locked it. Then he rushed home as fast as he could.

By seven o'clock he was at the corner of the street where Miss Patsy lived. His black shoes shone in the setting sunlight; his scalp prickled, he had combed his hair so vigorously; his face glowed red, and he wore his best suit.

He tapped his jacket as he waited. "What's that bulge in your inside pocket?" his mother had said. "Papers," he'd replied, "important papers." He didn't say there was also sixty pounds in notes. His mother was a widow, cautious and hard-working; she would have a fit if she knew he was walking about with all that money in his pocket.

Miss Patsy's door opened. And here she was, coming down the steps. She was wearing a greenish coat and a white beret. She carried a very smart-looking umbrella. He could see the flash of her legs as she moved briskly towards him. Then she faltered. "Alfie!"

"Oh—Miss Patsy. I was . . . coming to see you." The words scraped through his dry throat, unconvincing even to his own ears. Miss Patsy drew her brows together as she listened. She didn't look half so nice with her brows drawn together.

"Sam might have let me know before now! If I'd known. . . . But still, if you happen to be going, Alfie. . . . All right, come on."

HE took her on the stand side, where the plate-glass windows of the clubroom commanded a view of the whole track. You could go in the clubroom, she said, when it got cold; stand and drink and watch the races through the window. But it cost five shillings each—ten shillings, and he'd got only two pounds! Still, he wasn't interested in gambling. A couple of bob or so on two or three of the races, just to keep in the swim, that's all he wanted.

He bought a race card and gave it to her. They studied it, their backs to the expanse of plate-glass. Or, rather, Patsy studied it, and he studied her. She had a way of pursing her lips, in doubt, and then suddenly smiling up at him.

"You've not got anything, have you?"

"A tip? No."

"Shooting Star is a good dog at this length. And I saw a shooting star the other night. Yes, put five bob on for me. To win. I never back for a place, do you? Kids' betting, that. What're you backing?"

"Me? Oh—Pegasus, I think!"

He took his money out of his trousers pocket. He waited for Miss Patsy to open her bag and give him five shillings. She didn't. She smiled at him instead, laid a gloved hand on his arm. The feel of her hand flew all over his body.

"Hurry up, Alfie—they're getting ready. Not the Tote—look at the queues. Go to this bookie, here."

He stepped down the terracing. The bookie

Continued on page 43

ALONG MY LINE *by Gilbert Harding*

They try to teach me discipline-and fail

"Dad" Lampitt terrorized his school, but Gilbert was unbowed. Helped by a good memory he finally won his way to Cambridge and settled down to enjoy himself—rebellious as ever

I FOUND IT DIFFICULT to conform at the Royal Orphanage, Wolverhampton. My mother sent me to school there when I was nine years old, and though I was still somewhat timid, I was frequently in trouble. I remember the disastrous consequences of my resentment at being given a hundred lines for talking in class. After laboriously writing the banal words, "I must not talk in class," one hundred times, my anger soared till I felt a quite insane impulse to do some injury to the master who had humiliated me with this ridiculous punishment.

Going to his bedroom and finding it empty I made an apple-pie bed. From a small pantry I collected everything I could find on the shelves. Jams, pickles, a pot of honey—all went into the bed. I sprinkled pepper across the sheets and hid ornaments among the blankets. Muttering wild incantations as I went about my work, I gathered up the unfortunate man's books and papers and fiercely thrust them in a pile where his feet would normally be.

"That will teach you to make a fool of me," I muttered, stuffing a glass paperweight between the sheets and the mattress. Unfortunately, another master chose that moment to pay the absent master a call, and caught me as I was about to push an alarm clock into the rumpled bedclothes. I received eight of the best, with no intervening protection.

Much against my will I had been sent to the orphanage to "learn some discipline," as my grandfather put it. My father had died when I was five and I resented going to school and being separated from my mother, who was earning a living as matron of the Union Workhouse at Hereford, where I was born. As it was wartime, some of the masters were not very good.

Of the masters who used to drink too much, one was so far gone, as an alcoholic, that we were fairly safe in ragging him.

We used to keep our trunks or boxes under our beds. Whenever it was this unfortunate man's turn to do the nightly rounds, we used to push our boxes out to the foot of the beds. There was always the risk that Lampitt, the Head, might be on the prowl and ask what the boxes were doing there, but the risk was worth it. For whenever the "pickled" master walked in—moving rather unsteadily and holding on to the ends of the beds to keep himself from toppling—he would inevitably trip over one of the boxes and come down with a crash.

Harding (left, back row) found life pleasant at Queen's College, Cambridge. He plunged into university affairs, and wore a slouch hat and long black cloak for eccentric effect

Excited At Zeppelin Raids

Too fuddled to realize what had happened, he would be collecting what was left of his wits while one of the boys nipped out and pushed the boxes back into their places. Then we would all sit up in bed and complain loudly that the master had awakened us. He did not stay long at the school.

Sometimes our nights would be disturbed by the Zeppelin raids over West Bromwich. Though I was timid about so many things, the moment the Zepps approached the school I would sit up in bed tingling with an excitement that was not altogether unpleasurable. I have since been told by medical men that this is a common occurrence during moments of danger, and I experienced a similar reaction, many years later, in the second World War.

Whenever I got into mischief it was usually my lot to be caught. At one time we had a passion for playing with mirrors in the sun, menacing everybody by suddenly casting blinding reflections into unsuspecting eyes. After a while we were forbidden to carry mirrors at all. I did not hand mine in, however. One sunny afternoon, during a lesson under a master who was not very good at discipline, I was having a glorious time with my mirror when, looking into it, I saw the reflection of "Dad" Lampitt's outraged face. The usual beating followed.

Once, when Ramsay MacDonald came to visit

Nine-year-old Gilbert in his school uniform, with his sister. "We were grotesquely clad," he says. "Broadcloth pants, long blue coats, moleskin breeches, brown stockings, and boots"

Wolverhampton during an election tour, we were forbidden to go into the town. Naturally, I went. Not that I particularly admired or supported him, but I resented being told what and what not to do. Somewhere in the files of the Wolverhampton *Express and Star* there may still be a picture of me cheering MacDonald as he left the Star and Garter Hotel.

Lampitt's method of teaching us would make modern educationists shudder. We learned everything by rote, parrot fashion. We were terrified of him as he stalked into the room, his gown reeking of tobacco. Then he would begin to splutter and fume at us, and tobacco juice would shoot out in fine sprays everywhere about him.

Towards the end of his tired life, "Dad" was a very sick man indeed. Not that we boys suspected it. Those wartime strains and inadequacies literally killed him. Yet he went on teaching us till the end, going through the lessons with crystal lucidity.

One morning he was explaining a geometrical theorem, painstakingly writing down the riders on the blackboard. Before wiping them out he asked, as he usually did: "Any questions? Any doubts?" Our silence signified that we thoroughly understood what he had been telling us. The next day he returned to the subject. "Harding," he suddenly said. "Come out."

I went up to his platform.

"Do the eleventh rider."

I was completely stumped. "I'm afraid I can't remember it, sir," I confessed.

"You agree," Lampitt said quietly, "that yesterday I asked this class, 'Any questions? Any doubts?'"

"Yes, sir."

"And that there was no reply?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you not understand what I was telling you?"

"Not quite, sir."

"Then you were lying yesterday?"

"Yes, sir."

Lampitt looked despairingly at me and turned away with a shrug.

"I shall leave this room," he said curtly, and went out. We sat at our desks for a long time before realizing that he was not coming back. In the afternoon we learned that he had been taken ill. Within a week he was dead.

Glimpse Of Catholic Drama

Lampitt was at heart—as I now know—an Anglo-Catholic, but with a strictly Protestant foundation. It was not until we boys filed into his room to see him laid out that we noticed he was dressed in strange clerical clothing. Looking down into the coffin we found that he wore a chasuble, maniple, stole, amice and alb. I was oddly fascinated by this glimpse of Catholic drama—a fascination which was to obsess me more and more as I grew older.

Lampitt was succeeded by the Rev. William Louis Allen, a young, handsome, enlightened and indulgent clergyman who came to us from King's School, Chester, manifestly determined to improve matters. He immediately created a sensation by taking for the text of his first sermon the passage from St. John, x.10: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

His policy was a disaster, so far as I was concerned. Lampitt, more than any other man before or since, had known how to make me work. Unfortunately, perhaps, I always seem to know exactly when someone is trying to "sell" me anything, and I always resent it. So it was with Allen—a splendid man, with fine ideals and drive. When I found that he was trying to sell those ideals too hard, I ceased to take school work seriously.

Girls Shared School Debates

More human and humane than "Dad," Allen did manage to introduce many much-needed reforms. He started singing classes, amateur theatricals and, though not for a long while and not without a struggle, relaxed some of the more rigid rules of segregation between the girls' and boys' schools.

In later years I learned to abhor and detest social and racial segregation. The same applies to an over-strict division of boys and girls. I am sure it would have been a good thing if we had been allowed to see more of the girls. I might even have learned how to live permanently beside a woman without creating frenzies of exasperation and misery. It was a great advance, I remember, when the girls were eventually allowed to come to our debates.

Sometimes I would go on rambles with a girl of whom I had become very fond. Her name was Bertha Eaton, and she attended the girls' school. I used to meet her a little way from school and sometimes we would exchange kisses. We also managed to pass furtive notes to each other, one of the school kitchen-maids acting as messenger. During our long walks together we never found much to say. I was, I fear, cautious and unadventurous, and always strangely inarticulate in a girl's company.

When Allen introduced full-scale theatrical classes, it turned out that I was quite a good

The Rev. William Allen (centre) made life easier at the Royal orphanage. Gilbert (extreme left) got on too well with him to get much discipline

actor. Shylock, King Richard II, and Prince Hal in *Henry IV, Part I* were some of the parts I played. Junior boys were allowed to see the dress rehearsal of *Richard II*, I remember. In the play I was killed by Sir Pierce of Exton, played by a boy called Bird. After I had been stabbed and was sinking prostrate to the floor of my dungeon, I had to say the lines:

Mount, mount my soul! thy seat is up on high;
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downwards, here to die.

So effective, apparently, was my delivery of these lines that a little boy in the front row exclaimed in horror: "Gosh! Isn't Bird a beast!"

When, also in this play, I had to kiss the queen goodbye, I regret to say that I came, quite literally, unstuck. The queen was played, in true Elizabethan fashion, by a boy. Stanley Lester was his name. After the moving couplet,

One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part;
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart.

I had to go forward and plant a last, long kiss on Lester's lips. This always made us laugh, but our master, stressing that Shakespeare had clearly ordered that the kiss be given on the mouth, insisted that we stopped behaving like silly little asses and did the thing thoroughly. So we did; with the result that, during an actual performance before a crowded house, I found my false beard hopelessly stuck to Lester's face. When, at last, I managed to wrench myself away, I left more than half of my kingly moustache under the queen's nose.

This regal incident reminds me of a real royal occasion, the first of my encounters with members of our Royal family. This was the visit to the school of our late King, George VI, then Duke of York. There was great excitement long before the visit. An extra dash of drama was added when the headmaster received a threatening note from a suspected assassin. Two I.R.A. men had recently murdered Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in Eaton Square. One of these men was called Reg Dunn. The effect can easily be imagined when we boys learned of the arrival of a note from some crackbrained unfortunate warning him: "YOU HAD BETTER LOOK OUT. A PAL OF REG DUNN'S."

Coming shortly before the Duke's expected visit, it made the authorities decide not to take any chances. Frantic security measures were put into effect. The police made the school build a bridge between the road, where the Duke was due to step from his car, and the playing field, where an extra large marquee was erected to shelter him from the weather and now, presumably, an assassin's bullet.

Twenty-four hours before the Duke's arrival a number of hefty-looking men quietly infiltrated into the school. They were detectives! Excitedly, our thoughts turned to Sherlock Holmes and Sexton Blake, and we saw these guardians of law as front-line forces preparing to hurl themselves against a mysterious enemy. Actually, the way these bowler-hatted detectives prowled about the place, bobbing up from odd corners, clambering ladders and tapping walls, was more in keeping with a musical comedy burlesque than with gaslit Baker Street.

No pal of Reg Dunn's materialized, and on the day His Royal Highness seemed more worried about the rows of staring boys and girls than about any assassin. I felt quite sorry for him as he stood on a platform surrounded by flags, trying to disguise his extreme nervousness with a determined show of cheerfulness.

I had done pretty well that year, it seems, for I found myself going up to the platform to receive a prize for the third time. On the first two occasions the Duke had simply handed me the prize with a kindly smile. This time I suddenly realized that he was about to make some remark. For what seemed an eternity I waited for him to speak. I became apprehensive, wondering, as the seconds ticked by, if I had forgotten to brush my hair or knot my tie properly.

At last, the words came.

"What!" said the Duke slowly. "You—again?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, and bowed my way off

the platform, feeling like an Elizabethan courtier whose monarch has decided not to chop off his head after all.

I loafed through my last two years at school. Lessons no longer worried me, since all that was necessary was a good memory and good teachers, and I had both. I spent more time outside the school walls, and began to cultivate friends like Alfred Van Damm, who conducted the orchestra of the Queen's Cinema, Wolverhampton. He would let some of us older fellows into the cinema show for nothing, and give us tea for nothing, for the fun of talking to us; we had more in common with him than most of the provincials among whom he earned a living.

I got on very well with our Head. Too well, perhaps, as far as getting any real discipline was concerned. I stopped being in any particular form and was helping to teach the little boys in Form 2B. Sometimes, when the French master was away, I instructed elder boys in Form 4B.

Scholarship To Cambridge

There was one crucial obstacle between me and my next step—a Cambridge scholarship. I found examinations frightening. I hated the feeling that people were prying into my mind simply to find out what I did *not* know. So when three of us were sent to Cambridge to take an exam for the Fowler Scholarship, worth £250 a year, another boy, with better exam nerves than mine, won it.

He went to Clare College, and the idea was that I should go to one of the Redbrick Universities. Having set myself on the idea of going to Cambridge, I was bitterly upset. Just as I was preparing for the following year's exams, I had wonderful news. The other boy had withdrawn from Cambridge. So the scholarship was given to me, after all. The rest of my schooldays were spent in complete idleness till the day I left to take my place among the young gentlemen of Cambridge.

I arrived at the university on a bleak autumn day, wondering what to say if people asked me why I was not wearing an old school tie. In those days my school did not possess one. After a week or two it became clear that nobody cared sufficiently about my lack of a tie to make any comment at all. I was, nevertheless, always a little envious of anyone who possessed splendid ties and blazers.

At my first lodging, my landlady had a wooden leg with which, it was rumoured, she used to beat her husband. Whether this was true or not, I did not find my quarters there at all congenial. After a while, I was glad to move to Mrs. Gray's comfortable home at the edge of Grantchester Meadows. It has always been my way to form immediate likes and dislikes. My second landlady and I took to each other on sight; we have remained friends ever since.

Tutor Shivered In Pool

One of my tutors had the pleasant if socially unacceptable habit of liking to bathe naked. One morning, with several other undergraduates, I crossed Grantchester Meadows to bathe in Byron's Pool. It was still quite early when we reached this secluded, wooded spot. But someone else had got there even earlier, for we found our tutor in a terrible predicament. Having, as was his custom, stripped and entered the water in the raw, he suddenly discovered a group of women settling down a few yards from his clothes. It never occurred to the shy fellow to shout and tell the women to go away. So he remained shivering in the pool until we arrived. Seeing his predicament, we sent the women packing. Even then, he refused to get out until we also left him to dress in peace.

As we were one of the poorer colleges, our dons took great care to keep down the cost of living. For what I think was £36 a term we were provided with dinner in hall. At other colleges, "hall" was compulsory only twice a week. At Queens' we were not encouraged to "sign off" simply by being made to pay for our meals in hall whether we were there or not.

We poorer scholars were indebted to the wonderful Mr. Chamberlain, our college bursar. Thanks to his foresight, we fed well. Chamberlain, who has only just retired after nearly fifty years of service, supplied food that was easily the best in the university.

Our £36 included college dues, tuition, coal and "commons"—a good-sized pat of butter a week and a loaf of bread and some milk every day. If you incurred a bill at the college buttery of more than £10, you had to see the tutor for more credit—and if he knew you were poor you simply did not get it.

Somehow, even in those comparatively easy days, I never seemed to have enough money. My mother began by having the scholarship money paid to her direct, and from this she made me an allowance. But I soon persuaded her to let me have the money paid into a bank account, since when, I fear, I have never been financially stable.

I now possessed a cheque book, and found it all too easy to get anything I wanted without paying for it. Local tailors, shirtmakers, grocers, wine merchants and tobacconists were only too glad to let the gentlemen of the university have unlimited credit.

"Began To Enjoy Myself"

My French tutor and my German supervisor soon gave up trying to make me work diligently at these subjects. So I abandoned them for history, a notoriously easy subject, and settled down to enjoying myself.

To my surprise, I found myself making friends easily. I began to frequent the debates at the Union Society, and joined several clubs. I also made it my eccentric target to know the dean of every college and dine at each one of the university's seventeen men's colleges at least once before I went down. I reached this target, but not without occasional difficulties.

Soon I found myself speaking on every kind of subject at the Union. While I like to think now that I might have been president, I never stood, for the simple reason that I have always had a fear of being shown up. Even today, I rarely undertake to do a thing unless I am certain that I can put on a reasonably good show. But I was elected to the committee, of which I am now a permanent member.

Walked Home To London

Just before the end of my first term, five of us decided to save money by walking to London, where we intended to spend the Christmas holiday. Cambridge's hospitable walls were fading in a grey December dusk when we struck out along the main London road. We continued to walk through what became a bright, beautiful, moonlit night, passing farms and country towns whose sleeping inhabitants we soon thoroughly envied. Not far from the lunatic asylum at Colney Hatch—which I felt ought to have been our proper target—I really began to tire. However, some time after a cold dawn we reached the top of Highgate Hill and saw the domes and spires and gasholders of the capital.

As we dispersed to our various destinations, my feet dragging heavily over the hard pavements, I fervently echoed Henry Ford's wise maxim: "Exercise is bunk. If you are healthy you don't need it. If you are sick you shouldn't take it." Arriving at my host's house in Ashley Gardens, Westminster, I pitched through the front door and just managed to crawl up to bed, where I remained for the next two days.

At the Union, I once debated with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on spiritualism. I questioned the sense of women in psychic spasms giving birth to Assyrian jugs—or so they said.

"What is the point of it?" I asked.

Sir Arthur became very angry.

"When the great Faraday showed a stupid

Continued on page 46

ANNOUNCING JOHN BULL'S THIRD GREAT SUPPLEMENT

MY WIFE ODETTE

by Captain Peter Churchill

Captain Churchill and Odette revisit France

NEXT WEEK WE will present the third in our series of magnificent Supplements—a series unparalleled in the history of British magazine publishing.

Each Supplement has been specially chosen to illustrate one aspect of JOHN BULL'S unique three-fold appeal. Last week we gave you Gilbert Harding's witty, factual survey of Television's Great Year—representative of the scintillating personality articles which keep our readers entertained and informed.

This week, we present a complete new Hornblower novelette by C. S. Forester—typical of our policy of publishing the best work of the world's finest writers *before book publication*.

Our third detachable Supplement illustrates yet another field in which JOHN BULL is the undisputed leader—exciting real-life adventures.

We have secured the exclusive rights, before book publication, to the story of one of the most famous women of all time—Odette Churchill, heroic member of the French Resistance movement and the only living woman to hold the George Cross. Odette was captured by the Nazis and tortured for months; yet she refused to betray the man she loved.

That man was her commanding officer, Captain Peter Churchill. Next week, in JOHN BULL, he himself tells the complete story of how he met Odette, the girl he was later to marry.

She was a raw recruit when she was landed secretly in France from England. Under his tuition she became one of the most valued members of the Resistance—cool and courageous, yet possessed by an imp of mischief which got her into many dangerous situations.

Churchill's vivid narrative is illustrated with a magnificent full-colour painting by Gerald Fancett, and with remarkable photographs of Odette herself at the scenes of her adventures in France; they were specially taken for this Supplement by William Kemp, JOHN BULL senior staff photographer.

There will be an abnormally heavy demand for this issue of JOHN BULL, which also contains the start of an exciting new Hornblower novel by C. S. Forester (see page 10). The only way to make sure of your copy is to . . .

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DEATH AND THE SKY ABOVE

by ANDREW GARVE

The storm unleashed its full fury on them: they knew the boat would soon be out of control. For the moment there was only one thing that mattered: sheer survival

IN THE MEDWAY ESTUARY, a man wanted for murder was rowing desperately along the coast in a dinghy. He was searching for a yacht—a yacht that would take him to France. His name was Charles Hilary, and he had been condemned to death for a crime he had not committed—the killing of his wife Louise.

By an incredible chance—a prison fire—he had escaped from the death-cell and gone into hiding on a tiny island in the Medway mudflats.

The trial had received enormous publicity, for the girl for whom he was alleged to have killed his wife was Kathryn Forrester, a famous television star.

After his escape, Kathryn had supplied him with food from their cottage near the island and had staved off the police until a morning of sheer terror when they had searched the island. Charles Hilary had evaded capture only by burying himself in the mud, which had almost suffocated him.

Since then, the police seemed to have withdrawn. Charles and Kathryn had to plan quickly. They dared not be seen, either alone or together; by now, the whole country knew their faces from press photographs. They decided to borrow Witch, a friend's yacht, and sail her around the Kent coast. Kathryn would go ashore near Dover, and cross the Channel as a tourist complete with passport. Charles would sail on and land illegally near Calais.

Now, picking his way along the shore in the

A blinding sea of foam swept Charles and Kathryn off their feet. They realized it was too late to do anything now. Soon the boat must break up

dusk, Charles had found Witch. Feverishly he loaded her with stores and made her ready. Then he sat down to wait tensely for Kathryn. She was late, and a thousand fears came into his exhausted mind. . . .

At last, a low whistle in the darkness told him she had arrived.

PART 4

Setting Sail

KATHRYN emerged out of the darkness. "Thank heavens!" she said in a tremulous whisper. "I've been searching for you everywhere."

"Sorry, darling—the boat's been moved. I scarcely knew what to do."

"Is everything all right?"

"Yes, we're almost ready to go. Let's look for Peter's dinghy."

"Shall we need it?"

"I daren't leave it behind. Someone would be sure to think it odd."

After a brief search, they found the boat drawn out at the top of the bank and dragged it quickly to the water's edge. Kathryn climbed in and Charles towed it across to Witch and secured it. Then he proceeded to dispose of his own dinghy. Making sure that he had left nothing in it except the iron ballast, he pushed its bows down under the water. It began to fill, became waterlogged, gave a protesting gurgle, and sank slowly in three fathoms.

"All right," he said softly. "Let's go."

The tide was slack and the boat was lying head to wind, so that getting away presented no problem. Charles hoisted the tall sail and made the halyard fast. Kathryn stood by the tiller. There was a gentle splash as the mooring-buoy went overboard and, with the foresail backed, Witch's head began to pay off to port. The boom swung over with a rattle of blocks, the mainsail filled, and Kathryn took the slight strain. A faint chuckle of water rose from the stern and the shoreline slowly receded.

They were off!

For a few minutes, Charles busied himself on the cabin top, lighting the lamps and coiling down the ropes. Then he joined Kathryn in the cockpit. "Well, we've managed it!" he said with satisfaction. "Did you have a very frightful day?"

"It was a bit rushed, but everything went off all right. The bank said it was short notice for the money, but they got it for me."

"Passport okay?"

"Yes." She gave her pocket a slap. "And the suitcase is in the cloakroom at Dover."

"What about the car?"

"I left it in town and came down by train—it's what I'd have done if I'd really been going on an innocent trip."

He nodded, easing the sheet a little. "What's the time, darling?"

She peered. "Nearly half past eleven."

"Aren't you tired?"

"No, only excited."

He smiled. "We'll have to keep proper watches when we get out of the river."

The wind was light but steady and they were soon making good progress over the tide. Presently, Charles passed the tiller to Kathryn and went below. Among the charts he found one of the English Channel, which would come in useful for the second leg of the passage.

His spirits were high now that they were under way, but he had a nasty shock when he tapped the barometer on the cabin bulkhead. The needle took a sharp plunge downwards. His face became rather solemn, but he decided to keep the bad news to himself.

Kathryn was concentrating on the steering when he emerged, and she looked very much the yachtswoman. By the light of the cabin lamp he could see now that she was wearing slacks and a jersey with a windcheater over the top. Her hair was stuffed into a beret. She smiled happily as he came up on deck again.

As the car approached, they strolled slowly, like lovers, so as not to attract attention

"All in order?" she asked.

"Apple-pie." He stopped and flashed a torch into the bilge. "H'm! I think I'll pump her out. We may as well start dry, anyway."

By the time the pump began to suck air, they were rounding Folly Point, and he took over again as the wind came abeam. "What about a spot of food now," he suggested, "while everything's nice and quiet?"

"Tea and sandwiches?"

"Fine! . . . Oh, and I should make a few extra while you're about it," he added casually.

She read nothing sinister into the instructions, and went below to get the stove going. Charles noted the number of a buoy as it slipped past their quarter and checked their exact position on the chart. They were certainly covering the ground—provided the wind held steady they should be out of the estuary well before daybreak. If only the weather had been a bit more promising! The thought of the falling glass nagged at him continually.

FOR a moment he watched Kathryn's absorbed face as she sat on one of the berths buttering bread and opening tins, and he thought how wonderfully matter-of-fact she was, how content to trust him now that they were embarked on the trip. It made his responsibility all the greater. With a troubled frown, he turned again to the chart.

The food tasted excellent, and the cigarette that followed even better. The feeling that they no longer had to rush was very pleasant. By the time the meal was over, Charles reckoned that they must be passing the island where he had spent the day. The river was wider now, and surprisingly empty. In a whole hour they had seen nothing but a tug and one small steamer, going upstream on the tide. Except for the buoys, there were no lights anywhere.

Soon, they were approaching the congested exit from the estuary; they both became very alert. On either side of the fairway, vessels were moored—destroyers, old minesweepers, dredgers, barges, and occasionally a big cargo ship. The tide was sluicing in fast, and short, steep seas were beginning to fling them about so that they had to hang on to the sides of the cockpit for support. Steering was becoming more difficult, and once they missed a huge unlighted buoy by inches.

But they were getting very near the mouth now. On the port bow he could see the white flash of the Grain Hard buoy; ahead, the red beacon on Garrison Point. Suddenly he saw something else—the red, white and green that could only mean a vessel approaching head on. The quietness of the night was shattered by a single short blast on the ship's siren.

"An empty river, and then we meet something *here*!" Charles muttered between his teeth. He turned Witch to starboard a little, struggling with the kicking tiller as vicious little waves pounded at the rudder. There was still way on the yacht, but not very much, and he feared he might lose control of her altogether. Two lights on the land crept by each other at a snail's pace. Perhaps he ought to start the engine. Perhaps he was still on the fairway. . . .

Then the green light of the steamer slowly dimmed, and the red grew brighter. They were all right! Now they were slipping past the stone breakwater of Garrison Point.

They heard the thud of powerful engines, and in a moment a huge ship loomed out of the darkness, hung over them and passed less than a cable away. The bow wave caught them and tossed them about like dice in a box. A brief respite, and the stern wave followed, not quite so bad. Then Witch became manageable again. The river widened; on their starboard quarter, Garrison Point slowly receded. Charles switched on the binnacle lamp and set the yacht on her compass course. Ahead of them lay the open sea.

The tossing they had gone through in the river mouth had given Kathryn a headache, and when Charles suggested that she should go below for a while she made no protest. He watched her wriggle into one of the bags and draw the rug up around her, and presently he knew she was asleep. He would give her a couple of hours, he decided, and at daybreak—if she felt up to it—he would get her to take over.

NOW that they were out of the estuary he relaxed a little. It was true that he could see a lot more lights than the chart had led him to expect, but as long as he stuck to his course and didn't actually run into anything he should be all right. Visibility was good, and now that he had room to manoeuvre he felt less nervous about other shipping. The warm breeze that fanned the back of his neck was keeping the sails nicely filled, and as Witch drew away from the land, and the tide slackened, the viciousness began to go out of the waves. Soon the boat had settled to a steady rhythm, a buoyant rise and fall, that was by no means unpleasant.

But the long row to Upnor had tired him even more than he had realized, and his body craved sleep. Such sounds as there were only made him drowsier—the light tapping of the halyards against the mast, the creaking of a block as he eased the mainsheet, the gentle susurrus of the sea as it slipped away under the stern. But every time his head gave a nod the boat went off course and the swinging boom roused him again.

Just before six o'clock, by the light of a sullen dawn, he made out a black shape on the port bow and steered towards it. As he had

Continued on page 37

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

Irishman with a hunch catches TV's big moments

by JOHN ENNIS

Intuition makes free-lance producer John Irwin bubble with ideas. His favourite trick: spotlighting unscripted rows

John Irwin (left) discusses his new production *Snapshot* with associate producer Alan Sleath

TEMPERS WERE RISING between the four members of the panel of the television programme *In The News*. For twenty-eight minutes, on the evening of November 14, 1952, argument had grown in violence. With two minutes of the programme still to run, Alan Taylor, an Oxford don, announced to the other members of the team: "I shall take no further part in this discussion." Angered by the political prejudices that were dominating the discussion, he turned his back on his colleagues.

Viewers would hardly have noticed the incident if it had not been for the lightning decision of a lean, handsome Irishman who sat in the production room above the studio. John Irwin, producer of *In The News*, flashed out an order to the cameramen: "Hold Taylor."

Accustomed to a steady rhythm of changes from one camera to another, the twenty-four technicians in the studio grew tense as they waited for the order to send out a different face to television screens. Instead, they heard Irwin repeating, for the minute and a half that remained of the programme, *"Hold Taylor."*

Few television producers would have risked the wrath of the B.B.C. to give viewers the rare sight of a don, unaware that millions of eyes were upon him, sitting sulking. Irwin, a free-lance producer, had none of the fears that might have made a staff producer hide the incident. "Taylor was the man everybody wanted to see," Irwin says now. "So I let him be seen. There was no reaction from the B.B.C."

Created New Programmes

As the only independent television producer of novelty programmes, Irwin holds a position that is unique in British television. He created such popular programmes as *Kaleidoscope* and, in sound broadcasting, *Radio Newsreel*. In 1946 he put on a show, called *What's In A Face?* that was dropped by the B.B.C. after one programme. It was seen by an American who mentioned the idea to an American television company. The American programme that resulted was copied by the B.B.C. and called *What's My Line?*

At present, Irwin is producing two shows for the B.B.C., *In The News* and *Snapshot*. Of an original idea he has in preparation, Romney Wheeler, London director of the American National Broadcasting Company, says: "It is so unusual that we are watching it with great excitement in the United States. It will be an entirely new approach to television."

Already Irwin stands high in the esteem of American television experts. Last year he made a film of Bertrand Russell. When the film was shown, the *New Yorker* wrote: "This is the first intelligent use of the medium." Irwin recalls that the film was completed in one morning. "It was one of the easiest jobs I have ever done," he says.

By contrast, a radio programme into which Irwin put all his efforts brought only one reaction—a complaint. Soon after the war began he was asked to prepare, with John Pudney, the author, a feature on hospitals. He wanted a barrel organ to play "Keep The Home Fires Burning." After searching for days he discovered that Broadcasting House had an attic, and that the attic contained a barrel organ. He turned the handle for sixteen tunes, and "Keep The Home Fires Burning" was the sixteenth. Next day there came a protest from Delhi, in India, that the news in Hindustani had been incomprehensible because the announcer's voice had been drowned by a reverberating hurdy-gurdy. He found that the Hindustani news was read from the studio below the one he had used.

Tackled Piano Crisis

The speed at which Irwin thinks often leaves his acquaintances awestruck. Romney Wheeler says: "He has an active mind, full of creative ideas. I know of nobody in Britain who can come near him in ideas for the radio, television or films." Alan Sleath, a B.B.C. studio manager who often works under Irwin, says: "If I put a production problem to him, he stares at the opposite wall for two minutes, then says, 'This is the way to do it.'"

Sometimes his quick brain runs him into awkward situations. Once, in Belfast, a radio programme he was producing was due to go on the air in twenty-seven minutes when he realized that a grand piano, which should have been on the fifth floor of a building being used as temporary studios, was still in the main B.B.C. building next door. Seeking strong men, he telephoned eight piano firms and eleven undertakers, but none could do the job quickly. Then he called the police and said: "B.B.C. here. Emergency. Come at once," and slammed down the receiver.

He reached the main door of the building in time to see a sergeant of the Royal Ulster Constabulary breathlessly leading six sweating constables at a run up the steps. They carried drawn revolvers. As calmly as he could, Irwin said to the sergeant: "Take a deep breath. This may not be an emergency to you, but it is to me." With only twelve minutes left before the programme was due to begin, he explained what he wanted.

The sergeant changed colour, hesitated, then led his men to the piano. They hauled it down two flights of stairs, along the pavement and up five flights to the studio. Expecting to be fired, Irwin took next day to the regional executive officer an expense sheet which read: "Guinness for seven off-duty policemen—39s. 4d." The executive officer, a Scot, said: "Thirty-nine and fourpence? The piano firms always charge forty-five shillings. Could we always get the police to do it?"

Irwin is extremely confident of his ability to deal with any situation. Alan Sleath says: "At one time I would hesitate before putting a telephone call to Paris. After seeing John in action, I would not think twice of calling Hollywood and asking for Sam Goldwyn." A few years ago, Irwin was making a film for American television in which Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was appearing with Sir Hartley Shawcross, then Attorney-General. Sir Hartley was wearing a tasteful tie, but the technicians found it was reflecting too much light into the camera lens. Irwin dashed down from the production room, tore off his own tie, and made the Attorney-General make a hurried swop.

Last month, Irwin and Wheeler had lunch with Sir Osbert Sitwell and his sister Edith, the poet. Miss Sitwell is known as a brilliant conversationalist, and Irwin confesses that he read a great deal of modern poetry before he left for the Sitwell's home in Derbyshire. Instead of discussing poetry, however, Miss Sitwell sailed into an argument on the contribution of the Irish to the creative arts. At first, she was winning the argument, but Irwin fought back, and as the meal ended Miss Sitwell turned to her brother and said: "Now, Osbert, you take him on."

"Damned if he will," said Irwin. "That's an English trick for you." And of Sir Osbert he demanded: "How do we stand?"

"I think it is a draw," replied Sir Osbert.

Sometimes Irwin feels it is necessary to slap down the politicians who appear on *In The*

Their secretaries note down the points raised. Says Sleath: "Nobody in Britain can come near him for radio, television and film ideas"

Even Pippa, John's actress wife, marvels at his intuition. Once, he loaned his car to two strangers. They duly returned it cleaned, washed and polished

News. Once he told them: "If I am producing the Zoo Man, I deal with monkeys. On this programme I handle politicians. Animals, ballet dancers, singers or Members of Parliament—they are all performers to me."

Edgar Lustgarten, who deals with the political aspect of *In The News*, recalls another occasion when Irwin gently reminded the politicians that they were the performing animals of the programme. "We, as the management of the show, were arguing with the panel," says Lustgarten. "John said quietly, 'Gentlemen, if this goes on we shall have to take off our top hats and go into the ring with the whips.'"

Lustgarten believes that Irwin's intuition is largely responsible for making *In The News* one of television's most popular programmes. "He has an uncanny gift for seeing what is coming," says Lustgarten. "If Sir Robert Boothby makes a remark that is likely to annoy Michael Foot, Irwin has the camera on Foot almost before he has had time to become annoyed. At a result the viewer sees the impromptu interruptions that really make the programme."

Intuition Amazes Friends

Irwin's intuition often puzzles his acquaintances. He once attended a B.B.C. conference that was intended to last three hours. "By intuition I solved the problem we were to discuss after two minutes," he says. "But nobody was grateful. I could not explain any logical process that had led me to the solution, and I think they all wondered what they would do for the rest of the afternoon after writing in their desk diaries, 'Three-hour conference.'"

On another occasion, an intuitive action by Irwin had his friends and relations wondering if he had gone mad. His wife, Pippa Hiatt, the actress, recalls: "Johnny came home late one night during the war after working on *Radio Newsreel*. Next morning I noticed that his car was missing, and he told me he had lent it to two strangers. For days people were sympathizing with me for having married a lunatic." Irwin had given a lift to two airmen who were trying to hitch-hike from London to their camp in Gloucestershire. He had driven home, then handed over the car, telling the men to return it on their next day off.

For a week he smiled at the scepticism of his friends, saying: "Don't ask me why, but I know those two fellows are honest." He gained his point when, a week later, the car was returned. It had been thoroughly cleaned, all the chromium plating had been polished, the tank was full and there was a spare tin of petrol in the back. "He was terribly smug about it," says Mrs. Irwin.

John Irwin was one of twin boys born in 1912 to the wife of the Reverend T. J. Irwin, headmaster of Wesley College, Dublin. He remembers his father asking: "What are you going to be?"

"To this day I cannot answer that question," he says. He left Dublin University without his degree to become an actor at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. He has been a film actor, a radio producer, a film director and a war correspondent. He maintains he could find complete fulfilment only if he were a bullfighter.

He joined the B.B.C. staff in Northern Ireland in 1938, after simultaneously appearing in a play in London and taking a part in a film. Asked by St. John Pym, head of staff administration in Belfast, what he was earning, Irwin replied: "£300 a week." Mr. Pym told him: "We hadn't *quite* that much in mind. We were thinking of £300 a year." Following his rule of preferring interesting work to a big income, Irwin took the job.

One day in his office at the B.B.C., where he was a staff television producer for two years after the war, Irwin found on his desk a memorandum which pointed out that a particular lavatory was out of order. "I realized that I would have to take this memorandum from the *In* tray, initial it, and place it in the *Out* tray," he says. "And this brought home to me the fact that hundreds of creative people were wasting hours of their time on similar bureaucratic activities."

As an independent producer, Irwin has banished such actions from his life. Most of his work he does while sitting in the right-hand corner of a sofa in the window of his home in Bayswater. "He has broken the springs at that end," his wife points out. Within reach he keeps a telephone, a pencil, some odd scraps of paper, a tape recorder, a television set, and a large box of cigarettes which he chain-smokes. He organizes most of his work on the telephone or through the aid of a B.B.C. messenger.

"He has had two part-time secretaries in the B.B.C. who have never seen him," says Alan Sleath. "They know him only as a voice on the telephone. He is adept at organizing and delegating work to others. This is just what most people want, as they feel they have helped to create the production."

Irwin explains: "I am paid to work with my head, not my hands and feet. I have no training in any art or trade. I have two weapons—a tongue and intuition. With them I have achieved independence."

Sleath points out that the planning done on Irwin's sofa has its result in the studio. "When the time comes for the broadcast, there is an air of quiet, tidy efficiency that few other producers achieve."

America Makes An Offer

Irwin has had two offers of highly paid jobs in American television. He has no logical reason for not taking them up; he is merely waiting for his intuition to tell him when to go. "One day I will imagine myself walking in New York streets and eating in American restaurants, and I will know it is time to go," he says. The £15,000 a year paid to an American television producer would more than double his present income.

Recently Irwin bought a bowler hat to wear on a visit to Ascot with his wife. He has never gone out in it since. "He often puts it on, but somehow he never leaves the house in it," says Mrs. Irwin.

"I keep it behind the sofa," he says. "I put it on when I phone the B.B.C." THE END

"What is it?" asked Maria, standing at the cabin door. Hornblower turned quickly. "Nothing to be alarmed about, my dear," he said. "Compose yourself"

A NEW STORY by C. S. Forester is an event. A new Hornblower story is a major event. Since this famous sailor first appeared, in 1937, he has become the most popular character of fiction for decades. His first adventure, *The Happy Return,* was such an instantaneous success that C. S. Forester was forced by a clamouring public to continue the saga. All the time, Hornblower was advancing in rank until, after *Lord Hornblower,* in 1945, it looked as if his seagoing days were over. Then Forester hit on a brilliant idea.... WHAT HAD BEEN Hornblower's earlier history? In *Lieutenant Hornblower,* serialized in John Bull two years ago, the public learned. Now, with this magnificent and stirring new adventure—complete in this presentation supplement—another gap is filled

C. S. Forester, Hornblower's creator: his public demanded more and more

It was the most anxious moment of his career. Lord Nelson's coffin was in his charge—and the funeral barge was sinking!

HORNBLOWER AND THE NELSON TOUCH

by C. S. FORESTER

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

THE CANAL BOAT, having climbed up through the locks, was now winding over the pleasant Cotswold country. Hornblower was bubbling with good spirits, on his way to take up a new command, seeing new sights, travelling in an entirely new way, at a moment when the entirely unpredictable English weather had decided to stage a clear sunny day in the middle of December. This was a delightful way of travelling, despite the cold.

"Your pardon for a moment, ma'am," said Hornblower.

Maria, with the sleeping little Horatio in her arms, gave a sigh at her husband's restlessness and shifted her knees to allow him passage, and he rose under the restricted height of the first-class cabin and stepped out through the forward door into the open bow. Here he could stand on his sea chest and look round him.

It was a queer craft, fully seventy feet long and, judging by eye as he looked aft, he would think hardly five feet in beam. Her draught must be less than a foot; that was clear as she tore along behind the cantering horses at a speed that must certainly be all of eight knots —nine miles an hour.

The passage-boat was making her way from Gloucester to London along the Thames and Severn Canal; going far more smoothly than the stage coach, it was very nearly as fast and decidedly cheaper, at a penny a mile, even in the first-class. He and Maria, with the child, were the only first-class passengers, and the boatman, when Hornblower had paid the fares, had cocked an eye at Maria's condition and had said that by rights they ought to pay two children's fares instead of one. Maria had snorted with disdain at such vulgarity, while the onlookers chuckled.

Standing on his sea chest, Hornblower could look over the canal banks, at the grey stone boundary walls and the grey stone farms. The rhythmic sound of the hoofs of the cantering tow horses accentuated the smoothness of the travel; the boat itself made hardly a sound as it slid along over the surface of the water. Hornblower noticed that the boatmen had the trick of lifting the bows, by a sudden acceleration, on to the crest of the bow wave raised by her passage, and retaining them there.

It was this trick that made the fantastic speed possible. The cantering horses maintained their nine miles an hour, being changed every half hour. There were two towlines, attached to timber heads at bow and stern; one boatman rode as postilion on the rear horse, controlling the lead horse with shouts and the cracking of his whip. In the stern sat the other boatman, surly and with one hand missing and replaced by a hook; with the other he held the tiller and steered with a skill that Hornblower admired.

Hornblower strove to hide his excitement as he stepped on deck. From the sea of faces he heard a voice say: "Welcome aboard, sir"

A sudden ringing of the horses' hoofs on stone warned Hornblower just in time. The horses were dashing, without any slackening of pace, under a low bridge, where the towpath, cramped between the water and the arch, gave them barely room to pass. The mounted boatman buried his face in his horse's mane to pass under; Hornblower had just time to leap down from his sea chest and seat himself as the bridge hurried over him. He heard the helmsman's loud laugh at his momentary discomfiture.

"You learn to move fast in a canal boat, Captain," the steersman called to him from his place by the tiller. *"Two dozen for the last man off the yard!* None o' that here, but a broken head for you if you don't look lively."

"Don't let that fellow be so rude to you, Horatio," said Maria from the cabin. "Can't you stop him?"

"Not so easy, dear," replied Hornblower. "It's he who's captain of this craft, and I'm only a passenger."

"Well, if you can't stop him, come in here where he can't be rude to you."

"Yes, my dear, in a minute."

Hornblower chose to risk the jeers of the boatman rather than miss looking round him; this was the best opportunity he had had of watching the working of the canals which in the last thirty years had changed the economic face of England. And not far ahead was Sapperton Tunnel, the engineering marvel of the age. He certainly wanted to see that.

Now, the grey stone tower of a lock-house showed ahead, with the minute figure of the lock-keeper opening the gates. A yell from the postilion-boatman checked the speed of the horses; the boat glided on, its speed diminishing greatly as the bows slid off the bow wave. As the boat entered the lock, the one-handed steersman leaped ashore with a line which he flipped dexterously round a bollard.

"Heave us that line, Captain," he cried, and Hornblower obediently threw up the bowline for him to secure forward.

Already the lock-keeper was closing the gates behind them and soon the boat rose with the gurgling water.

The horses were changed in a twinkling; the postilion scrambled into his saddle, and proceeded to tilt a black bottle against his lips.

The steersman was casting off the lines—Hornblower took the bowline from him—and the lock-keeper's wife was thrusting at one upper gate while the lock-keeper, running up from the lower gate, thrust at the other. The postilion cracked his whip, the boat sprang forward while the helmsman leaped to his place astern, and they were off again with not a second wasted.

Assuredly, this canal traffic was a miracle of modernity, and it was gratifying to be on board the very fastest of the canal boats, the Queen Charlotte, that took priority over all other traffic. On her bow she carried a glittering scythe-blade as the proud symbol of her superior importance. It would sever the towline of any approaching boat which did not drop her line quickly enough to let her through. The two score of farmers' wives and wenches who sat aft

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in the second-class with their chickens and ducks and eggs and butter were all of them travelling as much as twenty miles to market, in the confident expectation of returning the same day. Quite astonishing.

Here, as they climbed to the summit level, lock succeeded lock at frequent intervals, and at each the postilion held his black bottle to his lips, and his yells to his horses became more raucous and his whip-cracking more continuous. Hornblower obediently handed the bowline at each lock, despite Maria's urgings to the contrary.

"My dear," said Hornblower, "we save time if I do."

"But it isn't right," said Maria. "He knows you're a captain in the Navy."

"He knows it too well," said Hornblower with a lopsided smile. "And after all I have a command to take up."

"As if it couldn't wait," snorted Maria.

It was hard to make Maria understand that to a captain his command was all in all, that he wished to lose not an hour, not a minute, in his journey to assume command of his sloop of war in London River; he was yearning to see what Atropos was like.

Now they were gliding down the summit level of the canal; the cutting was growing deeper and deeper, so that the echo of the sound of the horses' hoofs came ringing from the rocky banks.

"Hold hard, Charlie!" suddenly yelled the steersman. A moment later he sprang to the after towline and tried to cast it off from the timber head, and there was wild confusion. Shouts and yells on the towpath, horses whinnying, hoofs clattering.

Screams From The Cabin

Hornblower caught a glimpse of the lead horse leaping frantically up the steep slope of the cutting—just ahead of them was the castellated but gloomy mouth of the tunnel and there was no other way for the horse to turn. The Queen Charlotte lurched hideously against the bank to the accompaniment of screams from the second-class cabin; for a moment Hornblower was sure she would capsize. She righted herself and came to a stop as the towlines slackened; the frantic struggles of the second horse, entangled in two towlines, ended as it kicked itself free. The steersman had scrambled on to the towpath and had dropped the after line over a bollard.

"A pretty kettle o' fish," he said.

Another man had shown up, running down the bank from the top whence spare horses looked down at them, whinnying. He held the heads of the Queen Charlotte's horses, and near his feet lay Charlie, the boatman-postilion, his face a mask of blood.

To the women who were all scrambling out of the second-class cabin, the steersman bellowed: "Get ye back in there! All's well. Get ye back! Once let them loose on the country," he added to Hornblower, "and they'd be harder to catch than their own chickens."

"What is it, Horatio?" asked Maria, standing at the door of the first-class cabin.

"Nothing to alarm yourself about, my dear," said Hornblower. "Compose yourself. This is no time for agitation."

He turned and looked at the one-handed steersman, who bent down to examine Charlie; taking a hold of the breast of his coat with his steel hook, he hauled up, but Charlie's head only hung back helplessly, the blood running over his cheeks.

"Not much use out of Charlie," said the steersman, letting him drop with a thump.

As Hornblower stooped to look he could catch the reek of gin three feet from the bleeding mouth. Half stunned and half drunk, he thought.

"We've the tunnel to leg through," said the steersman. "Who's up at the tunnel house?"

"Ne'er a soul," replied the man with the horses. "The trade all went through in the early morning."

The steersman swore a couple of astonishing oaths—astonishing even to Hornblower, who had heard many in his time.

"What d'you mean by 'legging' through the tunnel?" Hornblower asked.

The steersman pointed with his hook at the black, forbidding tunnel mouth in the castellated entrance.

"No towpath through the tunnel, o'course, Captain," he said. "So we leaves our horses here an' we legs through. We puts a pair o' 'wings' on the bows—sort o' catheads, in a way. Charlie lies on one an' I lies on the other, wi' our heads inboard an' our feet agin the tunnel wall. Then we sort o' walks, and we gets the boat along that way, and we picks up another pair o' horses at the south end."

"I see," said Hornblower.

"I'll souse this sot wi' a couple o' buckets o' water," said the steersman. "Mebbe it'll bring him round."

"Maybe," said Hornblower.

But buckets of water made no difference to the unconscious Charlie, who was clearly concussed. The slow blood flowed again after his battered face had been washed clean. The steersman produced another couple of oaths.

"We have to have daylight to run the Thames staunches," said the steersman. "Two hours? We'll only just get there by daylight if we go now. Twelve hours late, we'll be."

A day late in taking up his command, thought Hornblower. "Damn it," he said, "I'll help you leg through."

"Good on ye, sir," said the steersman, significantly dropping the equalitarian "captain" for the "sir" he had carefully eschewed so far. "D'ye think you can?"

"Likely enough," said Hornblower.

"Let's fit those wings," said the steersman, with sudden decision.

They were small platforms, projecting out from either bow.

"Horatio," asked Maria, "whatever are you doing?"

"Just helping the boatman, dear," he said patiently.

"You don't think enough of your position," said Maria.

Hornblower was by now a sufficiently experienced married man to realize the advantages of allowing his wife to say what she liked as long as he could continue to do as he liked. With the wings fitted, he and the steersman on board, and the horseholder on the bank, took their places along the side of the Queen Charlotte. A strong united shove sent the boat gliding into the cut, heading for the tunnel.

"Keep 'er goin', sir." The steersman scrambled to the port side wing.

Hornblower hurried to the starboard wing and laid himself down on it as the bows of the boat crept into the dark tunnel. Lying on his right side, with his head inboard, he felt his feet come into contact with the brick lining of the tunnel. He pressed with his feet, and then, by a simple backwards walking motion, he urged the boat along.

"Hold hard, sir," said the steersman, his head beside Hornblower's. "There's two miles an' more to go."

Farther and farther into the tunnel they went, into darkness that increased in intensity, until it was frightfully, astonishingly dark, with the eye recording nothing at all, strain as it might.

After a few minutes Hornblower was acutely aware of the hardness of the platform on which he was lying; nor was it long before his legs began to protest against the effort demanded of them.

Into The Underground Cataract

So they went on through the darkness, in the strangest sort of mesmeric nightmare, suspended in utter blackness, utterly silent, for their speed was not sufficient to raise a ripple round the Queen Charlotte's bows. As Hornblower went on thrusting with his feet, urging his aching legs into further efforts; he could tell by the sensations conveyed through the soles of his shoes that the tunnel was no longer brick-lined—his feet pressed against naked rock, rough and irregular as the tunnellers' picks and gunpowder had left it.

He became aware of a slight noise in the distance—a low muttering sound; it was so feeble that when he first took note of it he realized that he had been hearing it already for some time. It

Lying on his side, he pressed his feet against the wall. By a walking motion,

gradually increased to a loud roaring.

"Easy a minute, sir," said the steersman, and Hornblower, wondering, rested his aching legs, while the steersman, still recumbent, fumbled and tugged beside him. Next moment he had dragged a tarpaulin completely over both of them, except for their feet protruding from under the edges. It was no darker under the tarpaulin, but it was considerably stuffier.

"Carry on, sir," said the steersman, and Hornblower recommenced pushing with his feet against the wall, the roaring he had heard before somewhat muffled by the tarpaulin. A trickle of water volleyed loudly on the tarpaulin, and then another, and he suddenly understood what the roaring was.

An underground spring here broke through the roof of the tunnel and tumbled roaring into the canal. The water fell in deafening cataracts, pressed the tarpaulin down upon him. Then the torrent eased, fell away to trickles, and they were past it.

"Only one more o' those," said the steersman in the stuffy darkness beside him. "It's better arter a dry summer."

"Are you wet, Horatio?" asked Maria's voice.

"No, dear," said Hornblower, the simple negative having the desired cushioning effect and smothering further expostulation.

Actually his feet were wet, but after eleven years at sea that was not a new experience; he was much more concerned with the weariness of his legs. It seemed an age before the next trickling of water and the steersman's "Here it comes!" heralded the next deluge. They crawled on beyond it, and the steersman, with a grunt of relief, dragged the tarpaulin from off them.

With its removal, Hornblower, twisting his neck, suddenly saw something far ahead. His eyes were by now accustomed to the darkness, and in that massive darkness, incredibly far away, there was something to be seen, a minute something, the size apparently of a grain of sand. It was the farther mouth of the tunnel.

With renewed vitality, he worked away with his legs. The tunnel opening grew in size, from a grain of sand to a pea; it assumed the crescent shape to be expected of it; it grew larger still, until Hornblower could see the dark surface of the water, the irregularities of the tunnel roof. Now the tunnel was brick-lined again, and the progress was easier.

"Easy all," said the steersman with a final thrust.

The boat slowly slid out of the tunnel's mouth, and despite its slow progress, and despite the fact that outside the sun shone with only wintry brilliance, he was quite blinded for a while. He sat up and blinked round him. There was a horseholder on the towpath with a pair of horses; he caught the line the steersman tossed to him and between them they drew the boat to the bank. Many of the passengers were leaving at this point, and they began to swarm out at once with their packages and their chickens. Others were waiting to board.

"Horatio," said Maria, coming out of the first-class cabin; little Horatio was awake now and was whimpering a little.

"Yes, my dear?"

Hornblower was conscious of Maria's eyes taking in the disorder of his clothes. He knew she would scold him, brush him down, treat him with the same maternal possessiveness as she treated his son, and he knew that at the moment he did not want to be possessed.

"One moment, dear, if you will pardon me," he said, and stepping nimbly ashore, he joined the steersman and the horseholder on the towpath.

"Any spare men here?" he asked.

"None, sir," said the steersman, and then, after a moment's hesitation, "I suppose, sir, you wouldn't care to drive a pair o' horses?"

"Not I," answered Hornblower hastily—he was taken sufficiently by surprise by the question to make no attempt to disguise his dismay at the thought of driving two horses in the manner of the injured Charlie. Then he saw how to recover his dignity and keep himself safe from Maria's ministrations, and he added: "But I'll take the tiller."

"O' course you could, sir," answered the steersman. "Not the first time you've handled a tiller. Not by a long chalk. An' I'll drive the nags. I've a contract on this here v'yage—that's two chests o' tea for'rard there, first o' the China crop for Lunnon delivery. You'll save me pounds, sir, an' my good name as well. I'm grateful to you, sir, that I am."

"That's all right," said Hornblower. "The sooner we start the sooner we arrive. What's your name?"

"Jenkins, sir. Tom Jenkins." The steersman—now to be postilion—tugged at his forelock. "Main topman in the old Superb, Cap'n Keates, sir."

"Very well, Jenkins. Let's start."

The horseholder tended to the business of attaching the horses' towlines, and while Jenkins cast off the bowline, Hornblower cast off the stern one and stood

he urged the canal boat along

by with a single turn round the bollard; Jenkins climbed nimbly into the saddle and draped the reins about his hook.

"But, Horatio," said Maria, "whatever are you thinking about?"

"About arriving in London, my dear," said Hornblower, and at that moment the whip cracked and the towlines tightened. Hornblower had to spring for the stern sheets, line in hand, and grab for the tiller. Maybe Maria was still expostulating, but Hornblower was far too busy to hear anything she said.

It was impressive how quickly the Queen Charlotte picked up speed as the horses, suddenly breaking into a trot, pulled her bows up on to her bow wave. From a trot they changed to a canter, and the speed seemed fantastic—far faster, to Hornblower's heated imagination, now that he was at the helm.

He looked forward to the approaching bend with some apprehension, and as they neared it he darted his eyes from bank to bank to make sure he was holding mid-channel. And round the bend, almost upon them, was a bridge—another of these infernal canal bridges, built for economy, with the towpath bulging out under the arch, so that it was hard to sight for the centre of the greatly narrowed channel. Maria was certainly saying something to him, and little Horatio was undoubtedly yelling like a fury, but this was no moment to spare them either a glance or a thought.

He steadied the boat round the bend. The hoofs of the lead horse were already ringing on the cobbles under the bridge. God! He was over too far. He tugged the tiller across. Too far the other way! He pushed the tiller back, straightening the boat on her course even as her bows entered the narrows. She turned, very nearly fast enough—her starboard quarter, just where he stood, hit with a solid thump against the elbow of the brick-faced canal side.

No time to think, not even though little Horatio had apparently been bumped by the shock and was now screaming even more wildly in the bows; the canal was curving back again and he had to guide the Queen Charlotte round the bend.

Crack-crack-crack-crack—that was Jenkins with his whip. Was not the speed already great enough for him? Round the bend, coming towards them, there was another canal boat, creeping peacefully along towed by a single horse. Hornblower realized that Jenkins's four whip-cracks were a signal, demanding a clear passage.

The bargee at the tow horse's head brought the beast to a standstill, edging him over into the hedge beside the towpath; the bargee's wife put her tiller over and the barge swerved majestically, with her residual way, towards the reeds that lined the opposite bank; and Hornblower headed the passage boat for the narrow space between the barge and the towpath. He was in a fair way towards panic as the passage boat dashed forward.

Starboard—meet her. Port—meet her. He was giving these orders to himself, as he might to his coxswain; like a streak of lightning through the dark confusion of his mind flashed the thought that although he might give the orders he could not trust his clumsy limbs to execute them with the precision of a skilled helmsman.

Into the gap now; the stern was still swinging and at the last moment he got the tiller over to check her. The barge seemed to flash by; out of the tail of his eye he was dimly aware of the bargee's wife's greeting, changing to surprise as she noted that the Queen Charlotte was being steered by a man quite unknown to her.

They were through, in that flash, and he could breathe again, he could smile, he could grin; all was well in a marvellous world, steering a passage boat at nine miles an hour along the Thames and Severn Canal. But that was another yell from Jenkins; he was checking his horses, and there was the grey tower of a lock-house ahead. The gates were open, lock-keeper standing by them. Hornblower steered for them, then, grabbing for the stern rope, leaped for the bank, and miraculously managed to keep his footing.

The bollard was ten feet ahead; he ran forward and dropped a loop over it and took the strain.

He let the line slip through his hands, watching the boat's progress, and then took too sudden a pull at it. Line and bollard creaked; the Queen Charlotte swung her bows across the lock to bump them against the farther side. She lay there half in and half out, helpless, so that the lock-keeper's wife had to run along from the farther gates, lean over, shove the bows clear while seizing the bow-line, and, with the line over her sturdy shoulder, haul the boat the final dozen yards into the lock—a clear waste of a couple of minutes.

"Maria—Get For'rard, I Say!"

Nor was this all, for, as they had now passed the summit level, this was a downward lock, and Hornblower had not readied his mind for this transition. He was taken by surprise when the Queen Charlotte subsided abruptly, with the opening of the gate paddles, along with the emptying water, and he had only just time to slack away the stern-line, or else the boat might have been left hanging on it.

"Ee, man, you know little about boats," said the lock-keeper's wife, and Hornblower's ears burned with embarrassment.

Now the lock was empty, the gates opening, the towlines tightening, and he had to leap six feet or more in a hurry into the already moving stern, remembering to take the stern-line down with him.

He managed it, clumsily as ever, and he heard the lock-keeper's wife's hearty laugh as he glided on below her.

And—heavens and earth!—here was Maria beside him having made her way aft through the second-class cabin.

"How can you let these people be so insolent to you, dear?" she was asking. "Why don't you tell them who you are?"

"My dear——" began Hornblower, and then stopped.

If Maria could not see the incongruity of a naval captain mishandling a canal boat, it was hopeless to argue.

"Why don't you answer me?" went on Maria. "And I have our dinner waiting for us, and little Horatio—"

She was like the voice of conscience.

"Maria," snapped Hornblower. "Get for'rard! Get for'rard, I say. Go back to the cabin."

"But, my dear——"

"Get for'rard!"

Hornblower roared this out—here was another barge approaching and he could spare no time for the niceties of married life.

"You are very heartless," said Maria, "and in my condition, too."

Heartless, maybe, but certainly preoccupied. Hornblower pulled the tiller over, and Maria put her handkerchief to her eyes and flounced—as much of a flounce as was possible to her as she was—back into the first-class cabin again.

There was still plenty of daylight when they came out into the Thames Valley. At last they reached Inglesham, with Lechlade church steeple in view ahead, and the junction with the river. At Inglesham lock, Jenkins left his horses and came to speak to Hornblower.

"There's three staunches on the river next that we have to run, sir," he said.

Hornblower had no idea what a staunch was, and he very much wanted to know before he had to "run" them, but at the same time he did not want to admit ignorance.

JENKINS may have been tactful enough to sense his difficulty; at least he gave an explanation.

"They're dams across the river, sir," he told Hornblower. "At this time o' year, with plenty of water, some o' the paddles are kept out for good, at towpath end o' the staunch. There's a fall o' five or six feet."

"Five or six feet?" repeated Hornblower, startled. "But what the devil do they have these staunches on the river for?"

"They keeps back the water for the mills—an' the navigation, sir."

"But why don't they have locks?"

Jenkins spread his hand and his hook in a gesture of ignorance.

"Dunno, sir. There's locks from Oxford down. These 'ere staunches are a plague. Takes six horses to get the old Queen Charlotte up 'em sometimes."

Hornblower nodded sagely at the information and Jenkins pointed down the canal. "The first 'un is half a mile below Lechlade Bridge, there. It's well over on the port side. You can't miss it, sir."

Hornblower hoped he was right about that. He took his place in the stern and seized the tiller with a bold attempt to conceal his misgivings. They shot out on to the surface of the young river and Lechlade Bridge was just ahead of them.

Though the air was distinctly cold now, Hornblower was conscious that his palms, as they rested on the tiller, were distinctly damp. To him it appeared a wildly reckless thing to do, to attempt to shoot the staunch, inexperienced as he was. He would prefer—infinitely prefer—not to try. But he had to steer through the arch of the bridge—the horses splashed fetlock deep there—and then it was too late to do anything about his change of mind.

There was the line of the staunch across the stream, the gap in it plainly visible on the port side.

Hornblower steered for the centre of the gap, choking a little with excitement; he could feel the altered trim of the boat as her bows sank and her stern rose on the slope. Now they were flying down. Below, the smooth slope narrowed down to a point, beyond which, and on each side, was the turbulent water of the eddy.

THE bows hit the turbulent water with a jar and a splash; the boat lurched in the eddy, but next moment the towlines plucked them forward again. Two seconds' careful steering and they were through the eddy and gliding over a smooth surface once more, foam-streaked but smooth, and Hornblower was laughing out loud.

Jenkins looked back, turning in his saddle, and waved his whip, and Hornblower waved back.

"Horatio, you *must* come and have your dinner," said Maria. "And you have left me alone all day."

"Not long before we reach Oxford now, dear," said Hornblower. He was just able to conceal the fact that he had temporarily, until then, forgotten the existence of his wife and child.

"Horatio——"

"In a little while, dear."

The winter evening was closing round them, the light mellowing while it faded over ploughland and meadow, over the pollard willows knee-deep in the stream, over the farmhouses and cottages. It was all very lovely; Hornblower had the feeling that he did not want this moment ever to end. Soon he would be back in another life again—plunged once more into a world of cruelty and war.

Hornblower breathed the evening air as though it were divine poetry, and then he noticed Jenkins waving to him from his saddle and pointing with his whip, and the moment was over, lost for ever.

That was the next staunch at which Jenkins was pointing. Hornblower steered boldly over it, without a moment of nervousness. On down the river, through the gathering night. Bridges; another staunch—Hornblower was glad it was the last; it was quite dark now, and he was cold and weary. Jenkins had lighted candle-lanterns; one hung on the collar of the lead horse and the other from the cantle of the saddle of the horse he rode.

The next time Maria came aft to him he could address her sympathetically, and even share her indignation that Oxford was so far away.

It was quite dark when Hornblower felt the boat slow up suddenly with the easing of the towlines, and in response to Jenkins's quiet hail he steered the boat towards a lantern-lit landing-stage; ready hands took the lines and moored the boat; the passengers swarmed out.

"Captain—sir?" said Jenkins.

That was not the way he had used the word "captain" at their first acquaintance. Then it had been with an equalitarian gibe; now he was using the intonation of any member of a ship's company addressing his captain.

"Yes?" said Hornblower.

"This is Oxford, sir, and the relief is here."

Arrival By Lantern Light

In the wavering lantern light, Hornblower could see the two men indicated.

"So now I can have my dinner?" he asked, with gentle irony.

"That you can, sir, an' it's sorry I am that you have had to wait for it. Sir, I'm your debtor. Sir——"

"Oh, that's all right, Jenkins," said Hornblower testily. "I had my own reasons for wishing to get to London."

"Thank'ee, sir, and——"

"How far to London now?"

"A hundred miles to Brentford, sir, by the river. You'll be there at the first light. How'll the tide be then, Jem?"

"Just at the flood," said the member of the relief crew holding the whip. "You can take water there, sir, an' be at Whitehall Steps in an hour."

"Thank you," said Hornblower. "I'll say goodbye to you, then, Jenkins."

"Goodbye, sir, and thank'ee agen for a true gennelman."

Maria was standing by the bows of the boat, and even in the dim light Hornblower thought he could detect reproach in her attitude. But it was not immediately apparent in her words.

"I've found you a hot supper, Horatio," was what she said.

"By jingo!" said Hornblower.

Standing on the quay were a few boys and young women come to sell food to the river travellers. The one who caught Hornblower's eye was a sturdy lad with a keg, clearly containing beer, on a barrow, and Hornblower realized that he was consumed with thirst even more acutely than with hunger.

"Give me a quart," he said.

"On'y pints, sir," said the boy.

"Two pints then, you lubber."

He emptied the first wooden piggin without an effort, without even taking breath, and started on the second, before he remembered his manners. "How about you, dear?" he asked Maria.

"I think I'd like half a pint," said Maria.

"On'y pints, sir," said the boy again.

"Well, give the lady a pint and I'll finish it," said Hornblower, his second piggin two-thirds empty.

"All aboard!" called the new steersman. "All aboard!"

"That'll be a shilling, sir," said the boy.

"Fourpence a pint for this beer!" marvelled Maria.

"Cheap at the price," said Hornblower. "Here, boy."

Out of sheer lightness of heart he gave

the boy a florin, and the boy spun it in the air delightedly before putting it in his pocket. Hornblower took the piggin from Maria's hand and drained it and tossed it to the boy.

"All aboard!"

Hornblower stepped down into the boat and elaborately handed Maria down, too.

He was taken a little aback to find that the Queen Charlotte had acquired some more first-class passengers either here or farther back along their route. There were two or three men and half a dozen women sitting in the cabin lit by the light of a lamp; little Horatio was asleep in one corner.

Maria was fluttered; she wanted to speak about domestic subjects, but was self-conscious about it in the presence of strangers. She whispered what she had to say, while her hands now and then gesticulated towards the stony-faced strangers to indicate how much more she would have said if there were no fellow passengers.

"That was two shillings you gave the boy, dear," she said. "Why did you do it?"

"Just lunacy, my dear, lunacy," said Hornblower, speaking lightheartedly but not far from the truth.

Maria sighed as she looked at this unpredictable husband of hers. "Here's the supper I bought," she said, "while you were talking to the men. I hope it's still hot. By now the bread and meat I brought for dinner will be stale."

"I'll eat whatever there is, and more," said Hornblower, with more than a quart of beer inside his otherwise empty stomach.

Hornblower—The Tactful Husband

Two wooden platters awaited them on the bench beside little Horatio. There were two sausages on each platter, embedded in masses of pease pudding, still steaming. Hornblower sat down with his platter on his lap and began to eat. These were beef sausages, naturally, if they were not mutton or possibly goat or horse, and they apparently were made from the purest gristle.

Hornblower stole a sideways glance at Maria, eating with apparent contentment. He had hurt her feelings several times today and he could not bear to do it again. He made a valiant effort to eat them. By the time he had started the second he decided it was beyond him. He made his handkerchief ready in his left hand.

"We'll be at the first lock any moment," he said to Maria, with a gesture of his right hand calling her attention to the dark window.

Maria tried to peer out, and Hornblower flipped the second sausage into his handkerchief, stuffed it into his side pocket, and applied himself to finishing off the pease pudding.

"You eat so fast, dear," said Maria. "It cannot be good for your stomach." She herself was struggling desperately with her own sausages.

"I'm hungry enough to eat a horse," said Hornblower. "Now I'll start on our dinner, stale or not."

"I am delighted," said Maria. "Let me——"

"No, dear. Sit still. I'll look after myself."

Hornblower took the food parcel and opened it.

"Quite excellent," he said, with his mouth full of bread and meat.

At every movement he was making amends to Maria for his cavalier treatment of her during the day. The larger the meals he ate, the more appetite he evinced, the better Maria was pleased. A little gesture like helping himself to his own dinner gratified her absurdly. He could give her so much happiness; he could hurt her so easily.

"I regret having seen so little of you during the day, dear," he said. "It was my loss. But if I had not helped with the working of the boat we should still be at Sapperton Tunnel."

"Yes, dear," said Maria.

"I would have liked to point out the scenery to you as we passed it," went on Hornblower. He was battling with the self-contempt that his hypocrisy aroused. "I trust you enjoyed it even so?"

"Not nearly as much as if you had been with me, dear," said Maria, but gratified beyond all measure. She darted glances at the other women in the cabin to detect the envy they must feel on account of her having such a wonderful husband.

"The boy was good?" asked Hornblower. "He ate his pap?"

"Every bit of it," answered Maria proudly, looking down at the sleeping child. "He was inclined to whimper at times, but now he is sleeping happily."

"And what about his little sister?" asked Hornblower. "Did she behave well?"

"Horatio!" said Maria, scandalized.

"I hope not badly, dear," said Hornblower, smiling away her embarrassment.

"No, excellently," admitted Maria.

Now they were gliding into a lock; Hornblower heard the rattle of the paddles behind let down behind them.

"You made very little progress with your sausages, dear," he said. "Let me dispose of them while you tackle some of this bread and meat, which is really delicious."

"But, dear——"

"I insist."

He took Maria's platter and his own, and stepped out into the bows of the boat in the darkness. It was the work of a moment to give the platters a quick rinse overside; the work of another moment to drop overside the sausage from his pocket. He returned with the dripping platters.

"Too dark to enjoy any scenery," he said; already the boat was moving out of the lock. "Maria, my dear, when you have completed your supper I will endeavour to make you as comfortable as is possible for the night."

He bent over the sleeping child while Maria repacked the remains of the supper.

"Now, my dear."

"Horatio, really you should not. Horatio, please. I beg of you——"

"No need for a hat at this time of night. Let's have it off. Now there's plenty of room for you on the bench. Put your feet up here. No need for shoes either. Now a pillow for your head. The bag will make a good foundation. Comfortable like that? Now, the coat over you to keep you warm. There, now sleep well, my dear."

Maria was carried away by his masterful attentions so that she could not protest.

She had lain still for a full two minutes before she opened her eyes again to ask about his own comfort.

"I shall be supremely comfortable, my dear. I'm an old campaigner. Now close those eyes again, and sleep in peace, my dear."

Ahead—His New Command

Hornblower was by no means supremely comfortable, although he had often spent worse nights, in open boats, for instance. With Maria and the child lying on the thinly cushioned bench he had necessarily to sit upright, as the other passengers were doing. What with the lamp and the breathing of all those people in the cramped little cabin, the air was stuffy; his legs were cramped, the small of his back ached, and the part on which he sat protested against bearing his weight unrelieved. He knew nothing, naturally, of the river between Oxford and London, so he could not guess where they were at any time. But they were heading downstream and towards his new command.

Lucky he was to have a command, he told himself. Not a frigate, but a sloop so big—twenty-two guns—as to justify having a captain and not a commander. Apparently Caldecott, the previous captain of the Atropos, had broken down in health while fitting her out at Deptford, which accounted for his unexpected summons thither to replace him. And the orders had no sooner reached him than the news of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar had arrived in England.

Since that time no one had a thought save for Nelson and Trafalgar. The country went wild with delight at the destruction of Villeneuve's fleet, and in the depths of sorrow at Nelson's death. Nelson — Trafalgar — Nelson — Trafalgar — no column in a newspaper, no momentary gossip with a stranger, but contained those names. The country had been lavish with its rewards. A State funeral was promised for Nelson; for the Navy there were peerages and knighthoods and promotions. With the re-creation of the rank of Admiral of the Red, twenty new admirals had been promoted from the top of the captains' list; two captains had fallen at Trafalgar and two more had died; so that Hornblower was now the 577th captain in seniority.

But, at the same time, promotion had been lavish among the commanders and lieutenants. There were forty-one new captains on the list—there was something gratifying in the thought that now he was senior to forty-two captains. But it meant that now there were six hundred and nineteen captains seeking employment, and even in the vast Royal Navy there were not enough vacancies for all those.

A hundred at least—more likely a hundred and fifty—would be on half-pay awaiting employment. That was as it should be, one might think. That proportion not only made allowance for sickness and old age among the captains, but also made it unnecessary to employ those who had been proved to be inefficient.

Unless the inefficient had friends in high places; then it would be the friendless and the unfortunate who languished on half-pay. Hornblower knew himself to be friendless, and even though he had just been congratulating himself on his good fortune, always thought himself ultimately doomed to misfortune. He was on his way to take over a ship that someone else had fitted out, with officers and men he knew nothing of; those facts were sufficient basis on which his gloomy pessimism could build itself.

Maria sighed and turned herself on the bench; Hornblower crept down to her to rearrange the heavy coat over her body.

At Brentford, in the early light of the winter's morning, it was cold and damp and gloomy. Little Horatio whimpered ceaselessly; Maria was uncomfortable and weary as she stood beside Hornblower while her trunk and Hornblower's two sea chests were hoisted out of the boat.

"Is it far to Deptford, my dear?" she asked.

"Far enough," said Hornblower; between Brentford and Deptford lay the whole extent of London and much more.

The wherrymen were soliciting for his custom.

"Boat, sir? Sculls, sir? Oars, sir?"

"Oars," said Hornblower.

It cost twice as much for a wherry rowed by two oarsmen as for one rowed by a single man with sculls, but with the ebbing tide it was worth it. Hornblower helped Maria and the baby down into the stern-sheets and looked on while the baggage was handed down.

"Right, Bill. Give way," said stroke-oar, and the wherry shot away from the slip out on to the grey river.

"Ooh," said Maria, a little afraid.

The oars ground in the rowlocks, the boat danced on the choppy water.

"They say the old King's fair mazed, sir, at Lord Nelson's death," said stroke, with a jerk of his hand towards Kew, across the river. "That's where he lives, sir. In the Palace there."

"Yes," said Hornblower, in no mood

Never, never, never would England forgive the man who allowed Nelson's coffin

to sink. He cast a quick glance down river, then: "Bail like hell!" he yelled

to discuss the king or Lord Nelson or anyone else.

The boatman and Maria fell into conversation, to Hornblower's relief; he could immerse himself in his thoughts then, in his hopes and his apprehensions—the latter predominating—about his ship that awaited him down the river. In only an hour or two, he would be on board.

The houses were getting thicker and thicker; they shot bridge after bridge, and the boat traffic on the river was growing dense.

"Whitehall Steps, ma'am," said the boatman, "and that 'ere's the Strand."

Hornblower had taken boat to Whitehall Steps often during those bitter days of half-pay when he was soliciting employment from the Admiralty.

"St. Paul's, ma'am."

Now they were really within the City of London. Hornblower could smell the smoke of the coal fires. Boats, lighters and barges covered the surface of the river, and there was London Bridge ahead of them.

"Give way, 'ard," said bow, and the two oarsmen pulled desperately through a gap in the traffic above the bridge. Through the narrow arches the tide ran fast; the river was piled up above the constriction of the bridge. They shot down through the narrow opening.

"Goodness!" said Maria.

And here was the greatest port in the world; ships at anchor, ships discharging cargo, with only the narrowest channel down the centre. North-country collier brigs, Ramsgate trawlers, coasters, grain ships, with the grey Tower looking down on them.

"Ah, the Pool's always a rare sight, ma'am," said stroke. "Even wi' the war an' all."

All this busy shipping was the best proof that Bonaparte across the water was losing his war against England. England could never be conquered while the navy dominated the sea, strangling the Continental powers while allowing free passage to British commerce.

Below the Pool lay a ship of war, idly at anchor, topmasts sent down, hands at work on stages overside, painting. At her bows was a crude figurehead of a draped female painted in red and white; in her clumsily carved hands she carried a large pair of gilded sheers, and it was those which told Hornblower what the ship was, before he could count the eleven gunports aside, before they passed under her stern and he could read her name: Atropos.

He choked down his excitement as he stared at her, taking note of her trim and her lines, of the petty officer of the anchor watch—of everything that in that piercing moment he could possibly observe.

"Atropos, twenty-two," said stroke-oar, noting Hornblower's interest.

"My husband is captain of her," said Maria proudly.

"Indeed, sir?" answered stroke, with a new respect that must have been gratifying to Maria.

Already the boat was swinging round; there was Deptford Creek and Deptford Hard.

"Easy!" said the bow. "Easy! Give way again." The boat rasped against the shore.

Hornblower paid the boatman under Maria's watchful eye; fortunately a riverside lounger came to solicit custom, and produced a barrow on which he piled the luggage. Hornblower took Maria's arm and helped her up the slippery Hard as she carried the baby.

"Glad I'll be," said Maria, "to take these shoes off. And the sooner little Horatio is changed the better. There, there, darling."

Only the briefest walk, luckily, took them to the George. A plump landlady received them, running a sympathetic eye over Maria's condition. She took them up to a room while a maid sped to get hot water and towels.

"There, my poppet," said the landlady to little Horatio.

"Oooh," said Maria, sitting on the bed and already beginning to take off her shoes. Hornblower stood by the door waiting for his sea chests to be brought up.

"When are you expecting, ma'am?" asked the landlady.

A Discussion On Midwives

It seemed not a moment before she and Maria were discussing midwives and the rising cost of living—the latter subject introduced by Maria's determination to chaffer over the price of the room. The potman and the riverside lounger carried the baggage up, interrupting the discussion. Hornblower took out his keys and knelt eagerly at his chest.

"Something hot, sir, while breakfast is preparing?" asked the landlady. "Rum punch? A dish o' tea?"

"Not for me, thank you," said Hornblower. He had his chest open by now and was unpacking it feverishly.

"Cannot that wait until we've had breakfast, dear?" asked Maria. "Then I could do it for you."

"I fear not, ma'am," said Hornblower, still on his knees.

"Your best shirts! You're crumpling them," protested Maria.

Hornblower was dragging out his uniform coat from beneath them. He laid the coat on the other chest and searched for his epaulette.

"You're going to your ship!" expostulated Maria.

"Of course, my dear."

The landlady was out of the room and conversation could run more freely.

"But you must have your breakfast first," said Maria.

Hornblower made himself see reason. "Five minutes for breakfast, then, after I've shaved," he said.

He laid out his coat on the bed, with a frown at its creases, and he unlatched the japanned box which held his cocked hat. He threw off the coat he was wearing and undid, feverishly, his neckcloth and stock. Little Horatio decided at that moment to protest again against a heartless world, and Hornblower unrolled his housewife and took out his razor and addressed himself to shaving while Maria attended to the baby.

"I'll take Horatio down for his bread and milk, dear," said Maria.

"Yes, dear," said Hornblower through the lather.

The mirror caught Maria's reflection, and he forced himself back into the world again. She was standing pathetically looking at him, and he put down his razor and took up the towel and wiped the lather from his mouth.

"Not a kiss since yesterday!" he said. "Maria, darling, don't you think you've been neglecting me?"

She came to his outheld arms. "I thought I was the neglected one," she whispered. She kissed him eagerly, possessively, her hands at his shoulders, holding him to her swollen body.

"I have been thinking about my duty," he said to her, "to the exclusion of the other thing I should have thought about. Can you forgive me, dearest?"

"Forgive!" the smile and the tears were both more evident as she spoke. "Don't say that, darling. Do what you will—I'm yours, I'm yours."

Hornblower felt a wave of real tenderness rise within him as he kissed her again; the happiness, the whole life, of a human creature depended on his patience and his tact.

"Sweetness," he said, "that makes you my very dearest possession."

And while he kissed her he thought of Atropos riding to her anchor out there in the river, and despised himself as a hypocritical unfaithful lover.

With breakfast finished at last, he took boat again at the Hard to go the short distance to his ship; as he sat in the stern-sheets he settled his cocked hat with its gold loop and button, and he let his cloak hang loose to reveal the epaulette on his right shoulder that marked him as a captain of less than three years' seniority.

He momentarily tapped his pocket to make sure that his orders were in it, and then sat upright in the boat with all the dignity he could muster. He could imagine what was happening in Atropos—the master's mate of the watch catching sight of his cocked hat and the epaulette, the messenger scurrying to tell the first lieutenant, the call for side-boys and bos'n's mates, the wave of nervousness and curiosity that would pass over the ship at the news that the new captain was about to come on board. The thought of it made him smile despite his own nervousness and curiosity.

"Boat ahoy!" came the hail from the ship.

The boatman gave an inquiring glance at Hornblower, received a nod in return, and turned to hail back with a pair of lungs of leather.

"Atropos!"

That was positive assurance to the ship that this was her captain approaching.

"Lay her alongside," said Hornblower.

Atropos sat low in the water, flush-decked; the mizzen chains were within easy reach of Hornblower where he stood.

He went up the ship's side, trying to conceal his excitement as he reached the deck amid the twittering of pipes, with his hand to his hat-brim in salute, but he was not capable of seeing with clarity the faces that awaited him there.

"John Jones, first lieutenant," said a voice. "Welcome aboard, sir!"

Then there were other names, other faces as vague as the names. Hornblower checked himself from swallowing in his excitement for fear lest it should be noticed. He went to some pains to speak in a tone of exactly the right pitch.

"Call the ship's company, Mr. Jones, if you please."

"All hands! All hands!"

The cry went through the ship while the pipes twittered and squealed again. There was a rush of feet, a bustling and a subdued murmur. Now there was a sea of faces before him in the waist, but he was still too excited to observe them in detail.

"Ship's company assembled, sir."

Hornblower touched his hat in reply—he had to assume that Jones had touched his hat to him, for he was not aware of it—and took out his orders and began to read.

Captain Of The Atropos

"Orders from the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, addressed to Captain Horatio Hornblower of His Majesty's Navy.

"You are hereby required—"

He read them through to the end, folded them, and returned them to his pocket. Now he was legally captain of the Atropos, holding a position of which only a court martial—or an Act of Parliament—or the loss of the ship—could deprive him. And from this moment his half-pay ceased and he would begin to draw the pay of a captain of a sixth-rate. Was it significant that it was from this moment the mists began to clear from before his eyes? Jones was a lantern-jawed man, his close-shaven beard showing blue through his tan. Hornblower met his eyes.

"Dismiss the ship's company, Mr. Jones."

"Aye aye, sir."

This might have been the moment for a speech, Hornblower knew. It was even customary to make one. But he had prepared nothing to say; and he told himself it was better to say nothing. He had it in mind that he would give a first impression of someone cold and hard and efficient and unsentimental. He

turned to the waiting group of lieutenants; now he could distinguish their features, recognize that they were distinct individuals, these men whom he would have to trust and use for years in the future; but their names had escaped him completely. He had really heard nothing of them in those excited seconds after arriving on the quarterdeck.

"Thank you, gentlemen," he said to them. "We shall know each other better soon, I do not doubt."

There was a touching of hats and a general turning away of them all except Jones.

"There's an Admiralty letter waiting for you, sir," said the latter.

An Admiralty letter! Orders! Hornblower felt his excitement surge up again.

"Thank you, Mr. Jones. I'll read it as soon as I have leisure."

"Would you care to come below, sir?"

"Thank you."

Captain's quarters in the Atropos were as minute as Hornblower had expected; the smallest possible day-cabin and night-cabin. They were so small that they were not bulk-headed off from one another; a curtain was supposed to be hung between them, but there was no curtain. There was nothing at all—no cot, no desk, no chair, nothing. Apparently Caldecott had made a clean sweep of all his belongings when he left the ship. There was nothing surprising about that, but it was inconvenient. The cabin was dark and stuffy, but as the ship was newly out of dry dock she had not yet acquired all the manifold smells which would impregnate her later.

"Where are these orders?" demanded Hornblower, brusque with his suppressed excitement.

"In my desk, sir. I'll fetch 'em at once."

It could not be too quickly for Hornblower, who stood under the little skylight awaiting Jones's return. He took the sealed package into his hand and stood holding it for a moment. This was an instant of transition. The journey of the last twenty-four hours had been a longer period, but of the same kind—an interval between one kind of activity and another. The next few seconds would eventually transform the Atropos from an idle ship in the Thames to an active ship at sea, lookouts at the mastheads, guns ready for action, peril and adventure and death only just over the horizon, if not alongside.

Opening The Sealed Orders

Hornblower broke the seal—the foul anchor of the Admiralty, the most inappropriate emblem conceivable for a nation that ruled the sea. Looking up, he met Jones's eyes, as the first lieutenant waited anxiously to hear their fate.

He could have announced beforehand what would be the first six words, or even the first twelve.

"You are hereby requested and required, immediately upon receipt of these orders—"

This was the moment; Hornblower savoured it for one half of one second.

"—to wait upon Henry Pallender, Esq., Blue Mantle Pursuivant at Arms, at the College of Heralds—"

"God bless my soul," said Hornblower.

"What is it, sir?" asked Jones.

"I don't know yet," answered Hornblower.

"—there to consult with him upon the arrangements to be made for the funeral Procession by water of the late Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson—"

"So that's it," said Hornblower.

"It's *what*, sir?" asked Jones, but Hornblower could not spare the time at present to enlighten him.

"—You will take upon yourself, by the authority of these orders, the command of all officers, seamen, and Royal Marines to be engaged in the Procession aforesaid, likewise of all vessels, boats and barges belonging to the Cities of London and Westminster and to the City Companies. You will issue all the orders necessary for the Procession to be conducted in a seaman-like manner. You will, by your consultations with Henry Pallender, Esq., aforesaid, ascertain the requirements of Ceremonial and Precedence, but you are hereby charged, upon your peril, to pay strict attention to conditions of Tide and Weather so that not only may Ceremonial be observed, but also that no Danger or Damage may be incurred by the boats, barges, and vessels aforesaid, nor by their Crews and Passengers."

"Please, sir. *Please*, sir," said Jones.

Hornblower's thoughts came back into the little cabin. "These orders are for me personally," he said. "Oh—very well, you can read them if you wish to."

Jones read them with moving lips and finally looked up at Hornblower with a bewildered expression. "So the ship stays here, sir?" he asked.

"She certainly does. She is from this moment the flagship of the funeral procession," said Hornblower. "I shall need a boat and boat's crew at once. Oh yes, and pen and paper to send a message to my wife."

"Aye aye, sir."

The Body At The Nore

Hornblower had been on board for a full ten minutes and he was no wiser about the things he most wanted to know—about how Atropos was manned and officered, what she lacked, what was her material condition—than he had been yesterday.

But all the problems with which he was anxious to deal must for the moment be shelved, to be dealt with at intervals when this strange duty permitted. Hornblower knew from the newspaper he had read yesterday that Nelson's body was at the Nore, awaiting a fair wind before being brought up to Greenwich. Time was pressing, and there were orders in hundreds to be written.

And so the moment of transition was over. If he had been allowed a thousand guesses as to what his orders would contain, he would never have thought of this particular duty. He could laugh about it if it were not so serious. He could laugh in any case, and he did. After a moment's glance of surprise Mr. Jones decided that he should laugh too, and did so, obsequiously.

"Black breeches?" asked Hornblower, startled.

"Of course. Black breeches and stockings, and mourning bands," said Mr. Pallender solemnly.

He was an aged man, and although the top of his head was bald he wore the remainder of his white hair long, clubbed at the nape of his neck in a thick, short queue tied with black ribbon. He had pale blue eyes, rheumy with age, and a thin, pointed nose which in the chill of the room bore a small drop at its reddish tip—perhaps always bore one.

Hornblower made a note on the sheet of paper before him regarding the black breeches and stockings and mourning bands.

"It would be best," went on Mr. Pallender, "if the procession were to pass through the City at midday. Then the populace will have plenty of time to assemble, and the apprentices can do a morning's work."

"I can't promise that," said Hornblower. "It depends on the tide."

"The tide, Captain Hornblower? You must realize that this is a ceremonial in which the Court—His Majesty himself—is deeply interested."

"But it has to depend on the tide all the same," said Hornblower. "And even on the winds, too."

"Indeed? His Majesty will be most provoked if his ideas are scouted."

"I see," said Hornblower.

He thought of remarking that although His Majesty ruled the waves he had no more control over the tides than had his illustrious predecessor, King Canute, but he thought better of it.

"Since the actual day of the ceremonial hasn't yet been decided upon," he said, "it might be possible to choose such a day as the tide serves best."

"I suppose so," said Mr. Pallender. ". . . the Lord Mayor will not be present in person, but his representative will."

"I understand."

There would be some small relief in not being responsible for the person of the Lord Mayor, but not much, seeing that the eight most senior admirals in the navy were going to be present, and were going to be his own responsibility.

"Are you sure you won't try a little of this brandy?" asked Mr. Pallender, giving the decanter a little push.

"No, thank you."

Hornblower had no desire at all to drink brandy at this time of day; but now he knew what gave Mr. Pallender's nose that reddish tip. Mr. Pallender sipped appreciatively before going on.

"Now as regards the minute guns——"

Along the processional route, apparently, there were fifteen points at which minute guns were to be fired, and His Majesty would be listening to see that they were properly timed.

Hornblower covered more paper with notes. There would be thirty-eight boats and barges in the procession, to be assembled in the tricky tideway at Greenwich, marshalled in order, brought up to Whitehall Steps, and dispersed again after delivering over the body to a naval guard of honour assembled there which would escort it to the Admiralty to lie there for the night before the final procession to St. Paul's.

"Can you tell me, sir," asked Hornblower, "what kind of vessel these ceremonial barges are?"

He regretted the question as soon as he asked it; Mr. Pallender showed surprise that any man should not be familiar with ceremonial barges, but as for knowing how handy they were in choppy water, or even how many oars a side they rowed, that was, of course, more than could be expected of Mr. Pallender.

He went on adding to his pages of notes while Mr. Pallender went on with what to him was most important—the order of precedence of the boats; how the whole College of Heralds would be present, including Norroy King of Arms and himself, Blue Mantle Pursuivant; the Royal Dukes and the Admirals; the formalities to be observed at the embarkation and the Landing; the Chief Mourner and the Train-bearer, the Pall-bearers and the Family of the Deceased.

"Thank you, sir," said Hornblower at last, gathering up his notes. "I will begin these preparations at once."

"Greatly obliged, I'm sure, sir," said Mr. Pallender.

It was a formidable assignment. Thirty-eight boats with their crews and oarsmen; guard of honour, mourners and officials; there would be a thousand officers and men at least under Hornblower's command. And Hornblower's heart sank when he was able to take one of the barges from Deptford Yard, and conduct his own trials with it.

It was a vast, clumsy vessel, not much smaller and no more manageable than a cargo lighter. Forward in the open bows she pulled twelve oars; from midships aft she was covered with a vast canopy of solid construction, exposing an enormous area to the wind. The barge allotted to the conveyance of the Body—Mr. Pallender had made that capital letter quite obvious in their discussion—was being so covered with plumes that she would catch the wind like a frigate's mainsail. There must be lusty oarsmen detailed to row that barge along.

He must time everything exactly—up with the flood tide, arriving at Whitehall Steps precisely at slack water so that the complicated manoeuvres there could be carried out with the minimum of risk, and then back with the ebb, dispersing barges and crews along the route.

A Case For Black Breeches

"My dear," said Maria to him, in their bedroom at the George, "I fear I have little of your attention at present."

"Your pardon, dear?" said Hornblower, looking round from the table at which he was writing. He was deep in plans for issuing a solid breakfast to a thousand men who would have small chance of eating again all day.

"I was telling you that I spoke to the midwife today. She seems a worthy woman. She will hold herself free from tomorrow. As she lives only in the next street, there is no need for her to take up residence here until the time comes, which is fortunate—you know how little money we have, Horatio."

"Yes, dear," said Hornblower. "Have those black breeches of mine been delivered yet?"

Hornblower ate hungrily while the governor talked. To the amazement

Maria resented her husband's apparent heartlessness. "Do you care more for your breeches than for your child?" she asked, "—or for me?"

"Dearest," answered Hornblower. He had to put down his pen and rise from his chair to comfort her. "I have much on my mind. I can't tell you how much I regret it at this moment." But he had to take Maria's hands in his and reassure her. "You, my dear," he said, "are my all in all. There is nothing in my world as important as you are."

She looked up radiantly to his face. "I wish I could be sure."

He kissed the hands he held. "What can I say to make you sure?" he asked. "That I love you?"

"That would be pleasant enough," said Maria.

"I love you, dear," he said, but he had not had a smile from her yet, and he went on, "I love you more dearly even than my new black breeches—more than a thousand pairs of black breeches. Could any man say more?"

She was smiling now, and she took her hands from his and laid them on his shoulders. "You are the kindest of husbands," she said, and the break in her voice showed she meant it.

"There, there," said Hornblower, patting her shoulders. Perhaps he felt as strongly over this business as Maria did, but he had much else to feel strongly about. And if he mismanaged these ceremonial arrangements the child to come might go on short commons with him on half-pay for life. And Nelson's body was at this very moment lying in state at Greenwich, and the day after tomorrow was the date fixed for the procession, with the tide beginning to flood at eleven, and there was still much to be done. He was glad to get back to Atropos and plunge into business there.

"Mr. Jones, I'd be glad if you'd call the midshipmen and master's mates. I need half a dozen who can write a fair round hand."

The cabin of the Atropos took on the appearance of a schoolroom, with the midshipmen sitting on mess stools at improvised tables, with inkwells and pens, copying out Hornblower's drafts of the orders.

The ninety different orders with their duplicates were written at last, and distributed by midnight; crews and petty officers had been found from various sources for every boat that was to take

of the petty officer, he would not drink anything but a glass of water

part in the procession, rations allotted and their places in the line clearly stated.

The final arrangements were made with Mr. Pallender at two in the morning of the day of the procession, and Hornblower, yawning, could think of nothing else to be done. Yes, there was a final change to be made.

"Mr. Horrocks, you will come with me with the Body in the first barge. Mr. Smiley, you'll command the second with the Chief Mourner."

Horrocks was the stupidest of the midshipmen and Smiley the brightest—it had been natural to reserve the latter for himself, but now he realized how stupid Horrocks was, and how necessary it was to keep him under his own eye.

"Aye aye, sir."

Hornblower fancied Smiley looked pleased at thus escaping from the direct supervision of his captain, and he pricked that bubble.

"You'll have nine admirals and four captains as passengers, Smiley," he said. "Including Admiral of the Fleet Sir Peter Parker and Lord St. Vincent."

Smiley did not look nearly so pleased at that.

"Mr. Jones, have the longboat with the hands at Greenwich Pier at six o'clock, if you please."

"Aye aye, sir."

"And call away the gig for me now."

"Aye aye, sir."

"I'll be at the George until five. Send any messages there."

"Aye aye, sir."

He still had a personal life; Maria was very near her time now.

"Our Child Will Be Born Today"

On deck there was a brisk westerly wind harping in the rigging, gusty, Hornblower noted. He stepped into the gig.

"Make for Deptford Hard," he ordered the coxswain, and clasped his coat tightly round him, for the cabin of the Atropos had been hot with lamps and candles and many people. He walked up the Hard and knocked at the door of the George. The door opened to reveal the landlady.

"Oh, it's you, sir. I thought it was the midwife. I've just sent Davie for her. Your good lady——"

"Let me by," said Hornblower.

Maria was walking about the bedroom in her dressing-gown; two candles illuminated the room, and the shadows of the bed-tester and the other furniture moved in sinister fashion as Hornblower opened the door.

"Darling!" said Maria.

Hornblower came towards her, his hands held out. "I hope all is well with you, dear," he said.

"I think so. I—I hope so. It has only just begun," said Maria.

They kissed.

"Darling," said Maria, "how good of you to come here. I—I was hoping I should see you again before—before—my time came."

"Not good of me," said Hornblower. "I came because I wanted to come. I wanted to see you."

"But you are so busy. Today is the day of the procession, is it not?"

"Yes," said Hornblower.

"And our child will be born today. A little girl, dear. Or another little boy?"

"We'll know soon," said Hornblower. He knew which Maria wanted. "Whichever it is we'll love her—or him."

"That we shall," said Maria.

The last syllable was jerked out of her more forcibly than necessary, and Maria's face took on an expression of preoccupation.

"How is it, dearest?" asked Hornblower, concerned.

"Only a pain," said Maria, smiling—forcing a smile, as Hornblower well knew. "They are not coming close together yet."

A bustle outside the door, and a knock heralded the entrance of the midwife and the landlady.

"Well, well," said the midwife. "So it has begun, has it?"

Hornblower looked her over carefully. She was not so neat, but she was at least sober, and her gap-toothed smile was kindly.

"I'll have a look at you, ma'am," said the midwife, and then, with a sidelong glance, "Gentlemen will retire."

Outside the bedroom the landlady was cordial in her offers of hospitality.

"How about a go of brandy, sir? Or a glass of rum, hot?"

"No, thank you," said Hornblower.

"You'd better come into the coffee-room, sir," said the landlady. "There's still what's left of the fire there."

"Thank you," said Hornblower, with a glance at his watch. God, how time was passing! He really must start preparations for the day. He began to list the things he needed from the bedroom upstairs, ticking them off on his fingers as he told them to the landlady. The black breeches and stockings, the epaulette and the best cocked hat, the sword and the mourning band.

"I'll get 'em, sir. You can dress in here—no one won't disturb you, not at this time o' night."

LATER he was dressed and looking at his watch again. "I must leave now," he said. "Will you find out if I can see my wife?"

"I'll tell you now you can't stir," said the landlady. "Not if you can hear what I can hear."

Much of what Hornblower felt must have shown in his expression, for the landlady went on: "It'll all be over in a hower, sir. Whyn't you wait a bit?"

"Wait?" repeated Hornblower, looking at his watch again. "No, I can't do that. I'll have to go."

The landlady lighted the candle of his lantern at that on the coffee-room mantel.

"Lord a mercy," she said. "You look just the picture. But it's cold out." She fastened the button of his coat close at his neck. "Can't have you catching cold. There! Don't you worry now."

Good advice, thought Hornblower, walking down the slope towards the river again, but as difficult to act upon as most good advice. He saw the light of the gig at the water's edge, and a sudden movement of shadowy figures there. The gig's crew must have appointed one of its members to keep watch for his lantern, while the others snatched what sleep they could in the exceedingly uncomfortable spaces of the gig. But however uncomfortable they were, they were better off than he was. He felt he could sleep on the bobstay of the Atropos if only he had the chance.

He got into the gig. "Down river," he ordered the coxswain.

At Greenwich Pier it was still dark, no sign as yet of the late January dawn. And the wind was blowing steadily from the west, downstream. It would probably freshen as the day went on. A loud challenge halted him on the pier.

"Friend," said Hornblower, opening his cloak for his lantern to show his uniform.

"Advance and give the countersign!"

"The Immortal Memory," said Hornblower—he had chosen that countersign himself; one detail out of a thousand details of the day before.

"Pass, friend. All's well."

The hospital was lighted up; there was already bustle and excitement there.

"The governor's dressing now, sir," said a wooden-legged lieutenant. "We're expecting the quality at eight."

"Yes," said Hornblower. "I know."

IT was he who had drawn up the time-table; the national, naval and civic dignitaries were to come by road from London, to accompany the Body back by water. And here was the Body, in its coffin, the trestles on which it lay concealed by flags and trophies and heraldic insignia. And here came the governor, limping with his rheumatism, his bald head shining in the lamplight.

"Morning, Hornblower."

"Good morning, sir."

"Everything settled?"

"Yes, sir. But the wind's blowing very fresh from the west. It'll hold back the flood—and delay the boats, too, of course, sir."

"Of course."

"In that case, sir, I'll be obliged if you would do all you can to see that the mourners leave in time. There'll be little to spare, sir."

"I'll do my best, Hornblower. But you can't hurry an Admiral of the Fleet. You can't hurry Lord St. Vincent. You can't hurry a Lord Mayor—not even his representative."

"It will be difficult, I know, sir."

"I'll do my best. But they have to have their bite of breakfast."

The governor gestured towards the next room, where, under the supervision of the wooden-legged lieutenant, seamen with black scarves round their necks were laying out a meal. There were cold pies, there were hams, there were cold roasts of beef being assembled on the buffet; silver was being set out on the dazzling white cloth. At the smaller buffet, a trusted petty officer was setting out decanters and bottles.

"A bite and a glass of something?" asked the governor.

Hornblower looked, as always, at his watch. "Thank you, sir. I've three minutes to spare."

It was gratifying to have a meal when he expected to have none; it was gratifying to gulp down slices of ham which otherwise would have gone down the throat of an Admiral of the Fleet. He washed the ham down with a glass of water, to the ill-concealed amazement of the petty officer at the wine buffet.

"Thank you, sir," he said to the governor. "I must take my leave now."

"Goodbye, Hornblower. Good luck."

At the pier now it was almost dawn. The river was alive with boats. From upstream the wind carried down the sound of the splash of oars and sharp naval commands. Here was the Atropos's longboat, with Smiley and Horrocks in the stern; here were the boats from the guardship and the receiving ship; measured tread on the pier heralded the arrival of another contingent of seamen. The day was beginning in earnest.

Really in earnest. The thirty-eight boats had to be manned and arranged in their correct order, stretching a mile downstream. There were the fools who had mislaid their orders, and the fools who could not understand theirs. Hornblower dashed up and down the line in the gig, that watch of his continually in and out of his pocket. To complicate matters, the grog sellers, anticipating a good day's business, were already out and rowing along the line, and they obviously had effected some surreptitious sales. There were red faces and foolish grins to be seen. The ebb was still running strongly, with the wind behind it.

Horrocks, in the State barge that was to carry the Body, completely misjudged his distances as he tried to come alongside. The clumsy great boat, swept round by the wind and borne by the tide, hit the pier on her starboard quarter with a resounding crash. Hornblower, on the pier, opened his mouth to swear, and then shut it again. If he were to swear at every mishap he would be voiceless soon. It was enough to dart a glance at the unhappy Horrocks. The big, raw-boned lout wilted under it; and then turned to rave at the oarsmen.

Hornblower left Horrocks struggling to get into his station, and stepped down into his gig again. They flew downstream, they toiled up. Everything seemed to be in order.

High and clear from the hospital came the notes of a trumpet. Tone-deaf as he was, the notes meant nothing to him. But the sound itself was sufficient. The militia were forming up along the road from the hospital to the pier, and here came the dignitaries in solemn procession, two by two, the least important leading. The boats came to receive them, in inverted order of numbers.

More and more important were the dignitaries advancing on to the pier—here were the Heralds and Pursuivants, Mr. Pallender among them. And here at last was the Chief Mourner, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Peter Parker, with Blackwood bearing his train, and eight other admirals with—as the drill-book stated—melancholy aspects.

Hornblower saw them down into their boat, all of them. The tide had turned. Minutes would be precious now.

The shattering boom of a gun not far away made Hornblower start, and he hoped nobody would notice it. That was the first of the minute guns, that would boom on from now until the Body reached its next temporary resting-place at the Admiralty. For Hornblower it was the signal that the Body had started from the hospital.

He handed Sir Peter Parker into the barge.

A loud order from the militia colonel, and the troops reversed their arms and rested on them. The mourners' barge had shoved off, and Horrocks was gingerly bringing his up to the pier.

Step Short, With Melancholy Aspect

Hornblower watched from under his eyebrows, but now that the wind was against the tide it was not such a difficult operation. The band approached and wheeled to the right at the base of the pier, and the seamen drawing the gun-carriage, stepping short, with bowed heads, came into view behind them.

Monotonously, the minute gun boomed, marking the passage of valuable time. Up to the pier's end came the carriage. It was a tricky business to transfer the coffin from the gun-carriage to the top of the State barge; Hornblower caught some of the words whispered, savagely, by the petty officer supervising the operation, and tried not to smile at their incongruity. But the coffin was put safely in place, and quickly lashed into position, and while the wreaths and flags were being arranged to conceal the lashings, Hornblower advanced to the barge. He had to make himself step short, with his back bowed and the melancholy aspect on his face, his reversed sword under his right arm, while making the wide stride from the pier on to the barge behind the canopy.

"Shove off!" he ordered; out of the side of his mouth. The minute guns bellowed a farewell as the barges left the pier. They headed out for mid-stream.

Hornblower wanted to look at his watch. Moreover, he realized that he would have to keep his eye continually on his watch, and he certainly could not be pulling it out of his pocket every minute. The foot of the coffin was there by his face. With a quick movement he hauled out both watch and chain, and hung them on the end handle, the watch dangling conveniently before his nose. They were four minutes late, but they still had eleven minutes in reserve.

"Lengthen the stroke," he growled to Horrocks.

Now they were rounding the bend. The shipping here was crowded with spectators, so was the shore, even as far from London as this. The Atropos had her yards manned by the remnants of her crew, as Hornblower had ordered. He could see that out of the tail of his

eye; and as they approached, the clear sharp bang of her aftermost nine-pounder took up the tale of minute guns from the one at Greenwich. All well, still.

Of all the ungrateful duties a naval officer ever had to perform, this must be the worst. However perfect the performance, would he receive any credit? Of course not. Nobody—not even the Admiralty—would stop and think how much thought and labour were necessary to arrange the greatest water procession London had ever seen, on one of the trickiest possible tideways. And if anything went wrong, hundreds of thousands of pairs of eyes were ready to see it, and hundreds of thousands of pairs of lips ready to open in condemnation.

"Sir! Sir!"

The curtains at the after end of the cabin had parted; an anxious seaman's face was peering out from where the reserve rowers lay concealed.

"What is it?"

"Sir! We've sprung a leak!"

My God! The news chimed in with his thoughts with perfectly devilish accuracy of timing.

"How bad?"

"Dunno, sir. But it's up over the floorboards. That's 'ow we know. Must be making pretty fast, sir."

That must have been when Horrocks allowed the barge to crash against the pier. Up over the floorboards already? They would never get to Whitehall Steps in time, then.

God, if they were to sink here in the middle of the river! Never, never, never, would England forgive the man who allowed Nelson's coffin to sink, unceremoniously, in Thames mud beside the Isle of Dogs.

To Hell With Half Measures!

Get into shore and effect repairs? With the whole procession behind them—God, what confusion there would be! And without a doubt at all they would miss the tide, and disappoint the waiting thousands, to say nothing of His Majesty. And tomorrow was the final ceremony, when the Body would be carried from the Admiralty to St. Paul's—dukes, peers, the royal family, thousands of troops, hundreds of thousands of people were to take part in it.

To sink would be disaster. To stop would be disaster. No, he could get into shore and effect repairs, causing to-day's ceremony to be abandoned. But then they could get the Body up to the Admiralty tonight, enabling to-morrow's funeral to be carried out! It would ruin him professionally, but it was the safest half-measure. No, no, no! To hell with half-measures.

"Mr. Horrocks!"

"Sir!"

"I'll take the tiller. Get down in there. Wait, you fool, and listen to me. Get those floorboards up and deal with that leak. Keep bailing—use hats or anything else. Find that leak and stop it if you can—use one of the men's shirts. Wait. Don't let the world see you bailing. Pitch the water out here, past my legs. Understand?"

"Er—yes, sir."

"Give me the tiller, then. Get below. And if you fail I'll have the hide off you, if it's the last thing I do on earth."

Horrocks dived down through the curtains, while Hornblower took the tiller. The westerly wind was blowing half a gale now.

The rowers clenched their teeth, snarling with the effort as they tugged at the oars, dragging the obstinate barge by main force forward. Here the wind, acting directly against the tide, was

Hornblower held out his arms to her, and she looked up radiantly to his face. "My dear," he said tenderly, "you are my all in all"

raising some quite respectable rollers, and the barge plunged over them, bows up, bows down, stagger, and heave, like a fishing smack in a gale at sea, lurching and plunging; it was hard to stand upright in her, harder to hold her on her course. Inch by inch they struggled round the bend.

"Haven't you got those floorboards up, Mr. Horrocks?" said Hornblower, trying to hurl the words down into the cabin without stooping in the sight of the crowds. He heard a splintering crash at that moment and Horrocks's face emerged between the curtains.

"They were all nailed down tight here," he said. "I had to prise 'em up. We're down by the stern an' we'd have to bail from here, anyways."

"How much water?"

"Nigh on a foot, I should say, sir."

"Bail like hell!"

Horrocks's nose had hardly been withdrawn from between the curtains when a hatful of water shot out past Hornblower's legs, and was followed by another and another and another. A good deal of it soused Hornblower's new black breeches. He cursed but he could not complain. That was Bermondsey on the Surrey shore; Hornblower glanced at his watch dangling from the coffin. They were dropping very slightly behind time, thanks to this wind. Not dangerously, though. They were not nearly in as much danger of missing the tide as they were of sinking in mid-river.

Hornblower shifted position miserably in his soaking breeches and glanced back. The procession was keeping station well enough. Ahead lay another bend; they would have a head-wind there again.

"Can't you plug that leak, Mr. Horrocks?"

"'Tain't easy, sir," said Horrocks, putting his nose out again. "There's a whole plank stove in. The tree-nails at the ends are on'y just holding, sir. If I plug too hard——"

"Oh, very well. Get on with the bailing again."

Make for the shore? Or over there beside the Tower? That would be a convenient place. No, damn it. Bail, bail, bail. Steer a course that gave them the utmost advantage from the flood and from the lee afforded by the shipping—that calculation was a tricky one. If he could spare a moment to look he could see the thousands of spectators massed along the shores. If he could spare a moment—God, he had forgotten all about Maria! He had left her in labour. Perhaps—most likely—the child was born by now. Perhaps—perhaps——no, that did not bear thinking about.

London Bridge, with its narrow arches and the wicked swirls and eddies beyond. He knew by the trials he made two days ago that the oars were too wide for the arches. Careful timing was necessary; fortunately the bridge itself broke most of the force of the wind. He brought the tiller over and steadied the barge on a course direct for the arch's centre.

"Now, pull!" he bellowed. The barge swept forward. "In oars!"

The Danger Point Arrives

Fortunately, they did it smartly. They shot into the arch; and there the wind was waiting for them, shrieking through the gap, but their way took them forward. Hornblower measured their progress with his eye. "Pull!" he yelled.

Out came the oars. They groaned in their rowlocks. The eddy was turning her—the oars were dragging her forward—now the rudder could bite again. Through—with the eddies left behind.

The water was still cascading out through the curtains, still soaking his dripping breeches, but despite the rate at which they were bailing he did not like the feel of the barge at all. The leak must be gaining on them, and they were nearing the danger point.

"Keep pulling!" he shouted to the rowers; glancing back, he saw the second barge, with the Chief Mourners, emerging from the bridge. Round the bend to sight the churches in the Strand—never did a shipwrecked mariner sight a sail with more pleasure.

"Water's nearly up to the thwarts, sir," said Horrocks.

"Bail, damn you!"

Somerset House, and one more bend, a shallow one, to Whitehall Steps. Hornblower knew what orders he had given for the procession—orders drawn up in consultation with Mr. Pallender. Here the funeral barge was to draw towards the Surrey bank, allowing the next six barges in turn to come alongside the steps and disembark their passengers.

When the passengers had formed up in proper order, and not until then, the funeral barge was to come alongside for the coffin to be disembarked with proper ceremony. But not with the barge sinking under his feet.

He turned and looked back to where Smiley was standing in the stern-sheets of the second barge and put up his hand with a gesture to stop; he accentuated the signal by gesturing as though pushing back. He had to repeat the signal before Smiley understood and nodded in reply.

Hornblower ported his helm and the barge came sluggishly round, creeping across the river towards the steps.

"Easy all!"

Thank God, they were alongside. There was a Herald at Arms, tabard and all, standing there with the naval officer in command of the escort.

"Sir!" protested the Herald, as vehemently as his melancholy aspect allowed. "You're out of your order—"

"Shut your mouth!" growled Hornblower, and then, to the naval officer, "Get this coffin ashore, quick!"

They got it ashore as quickly as dignity would permit; Hornblower, standing beside them, head bowed, sword reversed again, heaved a genuine sigh of relief as he saw, from his lowered brows, the barge rise perceptibly in the water when freed from the ponderous weight of the coffin. Still with his head bowed, he snapped his orders.

"Mr. Horrocks! Take the barge over to the jetty there. Quick. Get a tarpaulin overside and plug that leak. Get her bailed out. Give way, now."

THE barge drew away from the steps; Hornblower could see that Horrocks had not exaggerated when he said the water was up to the thwarts. Smiley, intelligently, was now bringing the Mourners' barge up to the steps, and Hornblower, remembering to step short, moved out of the way. One by one they landed, Sir Peter Parker with Blackwood bearing his train, Cornwallis.

St. Vincent, labouring on his gouty feet, his shoulders hunched as well as his head bent, could hardly wait to growl his complaints out of the corner of his mouth as he went up the steps.

"What the devil, Hornblower?" he demanded. "Don't you read your orders?"

Hornblower took a few steps—stepping slow and short—alongside him.

"We sprung a leak, sir—I mean, my lord," he said, out of the corner of his mouth in turn. "We were nigh on sinking. No time to spare."

"Ha!" said St. Vincent. "Oh, very well then. Make a report to that effect. I've no doubt I'll see you again."

"Thank you, my lord."

Hornblower halted again, head bowed, sword reversed, and allowed the other mourners to flow on past him.

I've no doubt I'll see you again. What did St. Vincent mean by that?

But there were too many things on his mind for any of them to stand out for long. Maria, the child, the Atropos. The future.

THE END

THE SEQUEL TO "HORNBLOWER AND THE NELSON TOUCH": a magnificent full-length novel by C. S. Forester begins in John Bull next week. See page 10

Dame Caroline is Britain's Lady Dynamo

by MARJORIE EARL

Though she works on the top rung of a man's world, Dame Caroline Haslett is no hardbitten battle-axe. But she has one formidable weapon: it is charm

THE NORMALLY UNCLOUDED BROW of the pretty twenty-four year old girl was wrinkled thoughtfully. Abstractedly she moved about the pleasant bedroom getting settled for a quiet country weekend. Suddenly she turned towards the older woman helping her to unpack. "Mother," she asked, "what's an agenda? How do I get one out?"

Mrs. Robert Haslett looked at her daughter in astonishment. "Caroline!" she exclaimed. "How absolutely shocking that you should have to ask such a question!"

"Well," replied her daughter defensively, "don't forget I've been hidden away in a boiler works for the last five years."

Today, Dame Caroline Haslett knows as much about agendas an anyone in Britain. For she sits on a score of public committees and is president, vice-president or chairman of nearly half of them. Since that day in 1919 when she had to appeal to her mother to define a word that now dominates her life she has drawn up more agendas than she can count.

"Generators Are My Loves"

An attractive middle-aged spinster with a ready laugh and an unruffled demeanour, Dame Caroline is often described as the busiest woman in Britain—or as the lady dynamo. "Power stations and generators are my great loves. I think they're magnificent," she says. To her colleagues, most of whom are men, she is known affectionately as "our Caroline."

Her principal occupation, one of two jobs each paying her a four-figure income which she does not divulge, is as director of the Electrical Association for Women. The other is as a member of the British Electricity Authority.

When she founded the E.A.W. twenty-nine years ago it had few members and no money. Today it has ten thousand members in 129 branches; three thousand British women hold its certificate for proficiency in electrical housecraft, and its educational programmes in schools, communities and universities are subsidized by public funds. In the beginning, Dame Caroline was everything from office boy to general manager in one room in the Y.W.C.A. Today, twenty-eight employees work under her in the association's head office in Grosvenor Place.

"I have always believed in women, and when I was young I thought I had a mission to help to clear up the silly prejudice against them," says Dame Caroline, explaining the motive that has governed her life ever since, as a girl, she used to follow the advice of Mrs. Pankhurst and chalk slogans on the pavements. "In addition I had a great love of engineering. How wonderful it would be, I thought, to weld the two and open up the world of engineering to women!"

In April, Dame Caroline was appointed chairman of the British Electrical Development

Once, the electrical industry laughed at Dame Caroline. Now, it loads honours upon her

With equipment like washing machines, Dame Caroline helped to free women from drudgery

Association. It is the first time that a woman has ever been chairman, but she no longer takes any notice of that sort of distinction. "I'm no hardened feminist," she says. "I like to be taken for granted, and I don't want to feel that it's important that a woman is chairing a man's meeting."

Since 1919, Dame Caroline has developed into one of Britain's most skilful chairmen. Probably no group of men is so aware of this as the leaders of the hosiery industry. One day, shortly after the end of the second World War, fourteen of them sat glumly about a table in a boardroom in Leicester. They were meeting to plan the postwar future of the industry and, without enthusiasm, they were waiting for the chairman of their newly formed group. There were predictions of certain failure, and muttered imprecations against Sir Stafford Cripps, the President of the Board of Trade, for daring to appoint a woman. Furthermore, she was late. ("It was the train's fault, not mine," Dame Caroline says.)

When she arrived she was greeted with frigid politeness. Before the meeting was over she managed to melt this into something resembling friendliness. At the end of ten months, when the working party disbanded after transforming Britain from an importer to an exporter of hosiery, the entire committee was eating out of her well-manicured hand.

"I never thought you'd do it," one trade union leader said at a farewell luncheon in Dame Caroline's honour. "It seemed too difficult even for a man, but a woman . . . how we hated the idea of a woman!"

For a woman alone in the world of men Dame Caroline Haslett possesses the most formidable of all weapons. This is not beauty for, apart from her candid, vivid blue eyes, she is not beautiful. She wears her greying hair in a plain style; her complexion is good without being extraordinary, her figure is heavy. But she has charm, and with it she is able to bend most circumstances to suit herself.

She Hated Housekeeping

"Caroline always gets her own way without pushing or thrusting," says Henry Young, of the electrical firm of Troughton and Young. "She is completely sincere in her intentions, and if people have a deep belief in what they are doing they always get disciples."

As a girl, it was difficult for Caroline to find disciples at home. "My mother was an extraordinarily intelligent woman, but I believe I must have been a great trial to her," she says. "I hated everything to do with housekeeping, and I was a dunce at school." Her father, an engineer, was even more distressed by her fascination with the precision tools in his workshop; he forbade her to touch them. She longed to have a career, preferably one where she could wear overalls, but he would not hear of it. He compromised on shorthand and typewriting. Then Caroline persuaded a firm of boiler makers to engage her as a secretary.

One day she was alone in the London office when a big order for equipment came from Persia. The young secretary's obvious duty was to forward it to the firm's head office in Scotland. Instead, she worked out the quotations, checking carefully because she was poor at arithmetic, and sent them off to Persia. Then she wrote a letter to her superiors in Scotland: "Herewith copy of quotations for a new order from Persia which I intend to get."

The men in Scotland shook their heads in amazement and decided that she would bear watching. When, after securing the Persian order, she insisted on a job in the factory, they laughed—but succumbed.

A few years later, as acting manager during the latter part of the first World War, she was obliged one day to go to the War Office with a contract for boilers which her firm was making. She arrived and sent her company's card to the office of the major in charge of the contract. A few minutes later she followed it into his office.

"Oh, hello," the major said jovially. "You're a bonny-looking girl. I expect you've come about typing. . . . I have to see a man about a boiler, but come back when he's gone."

"Sir," said Caroline, drawing herself up to her full five feet five inches, "*I* am the man who has come to see you about the boiler."

"Indeed!" he exclaimed. "What are we coming to if a slip of a girl can talk about boilers?" It did not take Caroline long to convince him that she knew more about boilers than he did.

Started With Pound Note

A brilliant engineering future seemed to be before her, but everything was changed when a colleague showed her an advertisement for a woman to run a women's engineering society.

The society had recently been founded by Lady Parsons, wife of Sir Charles Parsons, inventor of the turbine. Caroline decided to apply. She soon regretted it. The society's headquarters consisted of one small room with a filing cabinet, a table and a typewriter. The budget totalled £1, unceremoniously handed to her by the founder. "I expect you'll want some pencils, dear," said Lady Parsons. The new secretary's first duties were to write and edit a magazine called *Woman Engineer* and get out an agenda for a meeting.

After mastering these difficulties she had a new idea. Why should women be slaves to household drudgery? Caroline Haslett decided to do something about it.

On a bleak Tuesday in November, 1922, she hired a hall in Dover Street and offered women demonstrations of electrical equipment and lessons on mending fuses. Everybody thought she was crazy. "She asked me to wire the hall for her," said Henry Young. "I thought she was mad, too, but I did it."

Her next move was to ask leading electrical industrialists for money. They laughed.

One day she decided to do something to put her association on the map. The British Empire Exhibition was opening at Wembley that summer and, thanks to Caroline Haslett's gift of persuasion, the organizers welcomed a conference on women in science, industry and commerce. Caroline invited the Queen Mother, then Duchess of York, to address the opening luncheon, at which there were 1,500 guests.

The conference was an outstanding success. Just to make sure the chiefs of the electrical industry noticed *how* successful it had been, Miss Haslett sent them the bill for the luncheon.

Planned Electric Kitchen

Today, Dame Caroline lives in a house in St. John's Wood with a completely electrified kitchen which she planned herself. But she is not particularly domestic. Free evenings are spent reading reports and surveys. She rises early and retires late. Every minute of her day is planned. "I hate waste," she says. "So many people waste time by milling around."

Even as a girl she hated waste. One day she went to the local squire and asked him to give her an unused field so she could organize a village hockey club. He refused. Today, as a member of the Crawley New Town Development Corporation, she took a hand in requisitioning his field for workers' houses. "I enjoy picking his rhododendrons, too," she says.

Dame Caroline's office is a large airy room with a big desk, a conference table (usually three secretaries are sitting around it waiting for instructions) and a terrace where she snatches a few minutes' sunshine between engagements.

Took Princess Round Plants

The Queen has a particular interest in Dame Caroline. One day shortly after the war, Miss Haslett was summoned to Marlborough House by the late Queen Mary, who said that she thought queenship, like any other job, required preparation. She asked Miss Haslett to conduct Princess Elizabeth through some of Britain's factories and power stations. Shortly afterwards, Miss Haslett was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire.

When she met Queen Juliana, she was introduced as an engineer. "What a curious profession for a woman," murmured the queen.

"Actually, I'm not an engineer," Dame Caroline corrected. "I haven't had a technical education." She also disagreed that electrical engineering is a curious profession for a woman.

"It's time that parents stopped training their daughters as teachers or typists when some of them would be happier in overalls training as an engineer," she says. But Dame Caroline, whose success has been based less on feminism than on femininity, always adds: "I do not mean that the delightful courtesies between men and women should be given up."

When she became Ministry of Labour adviser on the employment of women early in the war, she startled her new colleagues. They were expecting a hard-bitten battle-axe. Instead, Dame Caroline, wearing a frivolous hat, looked over her bare office, smiled sweetly and said: "There must be curtains and flowers in here so everyone will know there is a woman around."

THE END

ABOVE US THE WAVES (10): Concluding the dramatic history of the navy's secret craft by CHARLES WARREN and JAMES BENSON

The midgets tackle their last-and toughest-target

IN WAR, every arm has its epic, and midget submarines were no exception. The successful attack on the battleship Tirpitz was to them what the Battle of Britain was to the Royal Air Force, or El Alamein to the army. But before hostilities ended another exploit of the small submarines was to pass into naval legend.

On a smaller scale than the great action in Alten Fjord, it equalled it in excitement, skill and daring. The actual attack was perhaps the most difficult that any midget ever carried out; and the two Victoria Crosses it earned were as hardly won as any awarded in the war. Fittingly, its code name was Operation Struggle.

Operation Struggle began in Labuan Island, near Borneo, on July 26, 1945, when the two midgets, XE1 and XE3, were towed out of Brunei Bay by the full-sized submarines Stygian and Spark. The targets lay 480 miles away; they were the 10,000-ton cruisers of the Imperial Japanese Navy, Takao and Nachi, anchored forty miles up the narrow Johore Strait, north and east of Singapore Island. Neither of these heavy cruisers had been to sea for some months, but their presence in the strait was a continual menace to Allied shipping. In addition, the Singapore causeway was within range of their guns, a fact which made that approach very difficult for our troops. Nachi was allocated to XE1 and Takao to XE3.

The four-day passage to the dropping point passed uneventfully; a tribute both to the towing submarines and to the passage crews that manned the midgets. The sea was calm and deserted, the air was warm. Sub-Lieutenant Frank Ogden, commanding the passage crew of of XE3, remembered another midget and different conditions—the X24 nosing its way through the wintry Norwegian waters to attack the Bergen floating dock fifteen months before. Ogden had been a third officer then and the theatre of operations had changed, but the duties aboard a midget had lost nothing of their rigour.

When, in the early dawn of the thirtieth, he boarded the rubber dinghy that had ferried the operational crew from the surfaced Stygian, he handed over XE3 in an almost perfect state. The only defects were a damaged induction trunking and the loss of the telephone bell connection on

Magennis cleaned six patches on the cruiser's keel. He was in grave danger. Oxygen streamed from his suit, damaged in struggling past the hatch

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD OSMOND

Jack Smart and "Tich" Fraser, who commanded the midgets in their final raid on two Japanese cruisers. Fraser was awarded the Victoria Cross for sinking the Takao. Smart received the D.S.O.

the periscope guard, which had been ripped off under tow.

Lieutenant Ian Fraser, D.S.C., who now took over command, was more than satisfied. Operation Struggle was not going to fail for lack of a good start.

"Tich" Fraser might have been predestined for midget submarines, both physically and by temperament. He was 5 ft. 4 in. tall and compactly built, an inestimable advantage in a craft where even men slightly below average height suffered considerable discomfort. Able to walk upright where others had to bend, he was spared the painful contortions necessary to taller men; Fraser moved about his control-room with the suave agility of a small master-chef in a cluttered hotel kitchen. Extremely able, technically, he had a lively and creative mind which he applied to everything that touched his trade. His ideas were novel and daring—sometimes too much so for higher authority.

Steered Through Minefield

Fraser's crew in XE3 consisted of Sub-Lieutenant W. ("Kiwi") Smith, a New Zealander, who was first lieutenant; the helmsman, Engine Room Artificer Charles Reed, and Leading Seaman J. J. ("Mick") Magennis, a quiet, softly spoken Ulsterman from Belfast, the diver.

The midget was finally slipped from Stygian at 23.00 hours, when within forty miles of the target. The night was cloudy, although the moon was out, and Fraser saw that position-finding was going to be difficult. He ordered a course of 240 degrees and a speed of five knots, then he climbed through the hatch and seated himself on the casing.

Fraser had his own reasons for this somewhat unorthodox position for, binoculars in hand, he was almost immediately navigating his craft through a minefield. He had chosen this course deliberately. Safe channels had been given him at the briefing, but he had been warned that these might hold enemy listening posts. Typically, Fraser preferred to rely on his own judgment to guide XE3 through the mines rather than take the clear passage and run the passive risk of detection. He was now in Singapore Strait and land was never more than five or six miles away on the starboard. He had been briefed to expect the sighting of several buoys; Fraser never saw a single one. The first part of the run-in on the surface was done entirely on dead reckoning.

Three hours after leaving Stygian, an accurate four-point fix confirmed Fraser's position. This was welcome, for his charts told him he was approaching more listening posts. The engine was stopped and the craft crept through the danger area on its battery motors. It was a nervous half hour and everyone felt much better when the engine was restarted and XE3 could proceed again at nearly five knots. Visibility, which had never been really bad, was gradually getting better.

At 3 a.m. on the thirty-first, when he was still squatting on the casing, Fraser thought he had sighted his first buoy. While trying to identify this on the chart, and when the object was less than fifty yards ahead, the "buoy" turned out to be a fishing boat. Here was danger, for the midget was between the craft and the moon; Fraser spoke down the hatch and XE3 sheered violently away. Ninety minutes later, more drastic evasive action was necessary when two fairly large craft were seen; Fraser took them to be a tanker and an escorting motor-boat; they were closing rapidly. The midget dived at once, settling down on the bottom to let the vessels pass.

Such manoeuvres were commonplace in the operation of X-craft and there seemed nothing unusual in this particular "dive and wait." It was only on coming to periscope depth thirty minutes later that Fraser became aware that his boat had been resting on a mine—an exercise that even the rigorous training programmes of the 12th Submarine Flotilla had never dared to practise.

His periscope sight showed Fraser that the ships were still on the same bearing and now considerably closer; he dived the midget once more, keeping her at thirty feet and on a course of 360 degrees. He was nearing the entrance to Johore Strait and the difficult part of the passage was about to begin. With this plunge, XE3 was not to surface again for a very long time.

Tablets Fought Off Sleep

At 6 a.m. Fraser, Smith and Reed took benzedrine tablets to fight off the sleep which all were now beginning to need. Magennis had no need of stimulants. Admirably unconcerned, and as if foreseeing that the tasks ahead were to stretch him to the limit of his strength, the diver had been sleeping in the engine-room for the last hour.

Shortly afterwards, it was calculated that the first serious obstacle, the anti-submarine net boom, was less than a mile away. Fraser therefore bottomed the midget to await the coming of daylight and to give his crew a much-needed break. He himself took a nap of half an hour. Only Reed, on whom the benzedrine had worked rapidly, kept fully awake. An hour later the drug began to exercise its full effect and every man in the craft felt himself at the peak of efficiency once more.

Proceeding again, the midget was brought to ten feet and headed on a course of 312 degrees. Fraser soon had an accurate periscope fix which told him that the net boom was still nearly four miles away. This was a disconcerting discovery, for it meant that the craft had made slower progress than expected. Fraser estimated that he had been pushing through an adverse tidal current of almost two knots. He immediately ordered an increase in speed, a speed he was to keep—except for periscope searches and safety measures—throughout the approach to the target. Even so, it would still take five hours to reach the Takao. The attack had yet to be made and, after it, there was the long run out to the open sea. The margin of time had narrowed dangerously.

First Moment Of Real Danger

At 10.30 a.m. Fraser sighted and closed the trawler that was acting as guard vessel at the net boom. Magennis was dressed and ready to leave the craft at short notice to cut a way through the net. Fortunately, his co-operation was not needed; to Fraser's delight the gate in the boom was open.

He was not out of the wood yet. The channel was shallow and the sea very translucent; a Jap glancing casually over the trawler's rail could not have failed to notice the midget. There was a chance, too, that the vessel carried detection apparatus. Fraser ordered "Dead Slow" and took his craft cautiously past the guard ship's starboard side. This was the first moment of real danger.

With the boom net left behind, XE3 had to be taken through several miles of narrow channel and beneath a certain amount of surface traffic, a passage that called for all Smith's concentration at the planes and most vigilant steering from coxswain Reed. The water was dead calm; Fraser dared take only hasty and infrequent periscope sights. These showed him, however, that all lights and buoys sighted in the Johore Strait were as shown in the Admiralty charts, a comforting discovery and one that was to be

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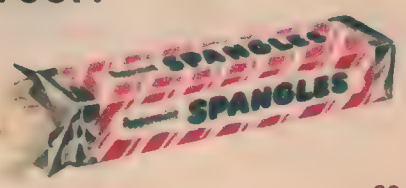


Another sweet treat by MARS!

of great help when he was going headlong for the sea after the attack.

At 12.50 p.m. exactly, Fraser saw the Takao, and the crew experienced what must be one of man's most primitive and ineradicable excitements—the knowledge that an unsuspecting quarry is at last within his reach.

Fraser saw all this in one good sight before submerging for the attack. He also saw what might have been a destroyer escort and, more disconcerting, a motor cutter full of Japanese liberty men less than thirty yards from the periscope lens—a sight that made him lower the "stick" very smartly. Sighting was going to be too dangerous, he decided, even though his periscope was pencil-thin and protruded only a few centimetres above the surface. The rest of the attack would have to be made "blind." Taking a quick bearing on Takao's "A" turret, he submerged to twenty-two feet. The arm was being drawn back for the blow. . . .

Hit Target With Clang

Almost at once, Fraser ran into difficulties. The cruiser was lying in uncommonly shallow water; XE3 had to close in with her own keel scraping the channel bed. Ten minutes later, it was unpleasantly plain that the midget had reached her target: she hit the vessel's plates with a loud and metallic clang. It seemed impossible that the enemy hadn't felt this savage jolt. If he had, there was nothing the midget's crew could do but await counter-action.

Imperturbably, Fraser ordered the craft hard astern. At first she appeared to be stuck fast; only several brutal motor movements managed to get any way on her at all. Further investigation, mainly by trial and error, showed that the cruiser was nearly aground both fore and aft; the only section with enough water to let XE3 place her charges was a small area amidships. Fraser drew off, altered course, and prepared a second entry.

These manoeuvres had taken time, and it was now getting dangerously late; the adverse current met coming up the strait had left Fraser little opportunity to sum up the situation. He decided to go boldly for a point just below the forward funnel and more or less where he believed the cavity of deeper water to be. After forty minutes of alternately bumping the bottom and scraping the target's hull, Fraser brought his craft under the centre of the cruiser; the after gauge was showing the meagre depth of twenty-two feet. Now he drove the midget between the Takao's plates and the sea bed; it was hardly the perfect position, but it would have to serve.

Wedged Under Cruiser

Magennis, already prepared, was sitting in the "wet and dry," or escape compartment, just forward of the control-room. After checking his oxygen apparatus he gave the signal; the watertight doors to the control-room were closed and the compartment started to flood. When the external and internal pressures were equalized, Magennis tried to open the hatch above him. To his dismay, it opened only a quarter of the way. It was clear what had happened; the midget was so tightly wedged under the cruiser that it was impossible for the antennae to do their work. These were the three spring-loaded "legs" fitted to allow the craft to come up and rest under, but slightly away from, the hull of the target, thus giving the diver a space of three feet in which to operate.

As it was, XE3's forward antennae could not be extended vertically; the small thirty-nine ton midget was squeezed between the hard sea-bed and the ten thousand tons of Takao's steel—with the prospect of being squeezed even tighter on the falling tide. A naked man might just have passed through the hatch's narrow opening; for an X-craft diver with swelling breathing apparatus on his chest the task was almost impossible. Nine men out of ten might have honourably capitulated there and then. Leading Seaman Magennis was the tenth.

He quickly deflated his breathing-bag and exhaled until his chest was as small as he could make it; then he tackled the hatch once more. An inch at a time, he drew himself through the aperture and on to the midget's casing. He was out—and immediately met great danger. In his battle with the hatch's lid, some part of his apparatus had been damaged: from it an unstanchable stream of oxygen bubbles was speeding to the surface. Magennis could imagine them breaking above, under the eyes of any Jap who might be leaning over the cruiser's side or passing in a boat. That string of bubbles could cost his life, and the success of the operation. Magennis did not give it another thought.

He crawled along the casing to the port container which held the six limpet charges he must clamp to the target; he took out the first and turned towards the hull. It presented two problems. The plates were befouled with barnacles and seaweed, a surface to which no limpet would adhere; and the pronounced slope of the base of Takao's hull, so different from that of a European-built ship, seemed almost too much for magnets to overcome.

Once more, a less determined man could have been excused for leaving the job undone. Magennis went at it without hesitation. He cleaned six patches on the plates of incrustations, and secured the charges in pairs with a line running under the cruiser's keel; when the operation was over, the limpets were strung over a distance of forty-five feet. This sequence of scraping, swimming, carrying and tying would have been exhausting for any diver; for one handicapped by a steady leakage of oxygen it was a terrifying strain. It was done eventually and Magennis could apply his remaining energy to the task of re-entering the midget.

After a slow, breathless struggle, he managed to force himself back into the "wet and dry" and close the hatch with his lacerated hands. One final effort was required. With the last resource left him before near collapse, he just succeeded in operating the draining-valves. He had been in the sea for forty minutes.

With the diver back in the control-room, one thing remained to be done before XE3 could withdraw; this was the release of the starboard crescent-shaped container packed with two tons of fused high explosive. A turn on the big basket-wheel sent it rocking down to the bottom to lie under the cruiser. The attack was over. All Fraser had to do now was to go hard astern and run for the sea. But it seemed as if the Takao was reluctant to let her attacker out of her grip.

Midget Out Of Control

For fifty minutes—it must have appeared a hundred times as long—Fraser took the craft full astern and full ahead, pumped and blew his tanks. Every possible manoeuvre that four experienced submariners could call to mind was employed. XE3 refused to move.

Finally, just when the men were beginning to think that they would still be under the ship when the charges exploded, the midget suddenly shot out astern, without warning and completely out of control. Like an enormous fish rising, she nearly broke surface; there was an impressive upheaval of water thirty yards from the cruiser. Seconds later, she was back on the bottom again with all tanks flooded—and four rather fast-beating hearts.

Fraser knew at once why the craft was so difficult to control, and the reason was serious. The empty container that had housed the limpet mines was still attached to the port side. Damaged in some way while the boat was wedged under Takao, it had not been dropped by the release mechanism. If XE3 were ever to get out of Johore Strait, the flooded container had to be cleared. Fraser tried the release once more, but all effort from the inside was useless. Somebody had to leave the submarine and enter the sea.

Tackled Damaged Part

It could hardly have been a more dangerous mission. XE3 was lying in fifteen feet of clear water, in sight of the cruiser and below a frequented channel. Bubbles were bound to be caused when the escape hatch was opened; the risk of detection was very great. But the risk had to be taken, and taken at once. Fraser wished to go out himself, but Magennis was the craft's diver and this was a diver's job; he immediately asserted his right to undertake it. He was still very shaky after his previous dive, his hands were seriously torn and his breathing-apparatus was defective. Resolutely, at 16.25 hours, he turned on his oxygen again.

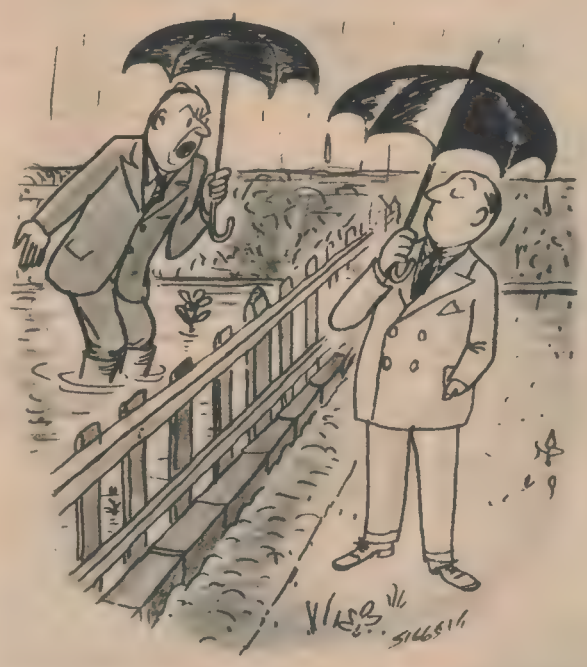
Soon, with a large spanner in his hand, he was crawling along the midget's casing. The men inside waited breathlessly; in a minute or two a muffled clanging told them that Magennis was at work—nerve-racking, back-breaking work. With a garland of bubbles wavering above him, the diver banged and levered at the container's release-pins. Finally, the last one gave, and the great steel box sank clear. At 16.39, fourteen minutes after entering it, Magennis lowered himself into the "wet and dry." This time, no longer pinched under the cruiser's hull, the upper lid of the escape hatch opened and shut with comparative ease, although nothing could have been easy to a man at that pitch of fatigue. The water drained from the compartment and Magennis was helped into the control-room. He was barely conscious.

Now, at last, Fraser could get under way. He had been too long near the Takao: no man could ever have been more eager to see the last of a ship. The run-out was by no means plain sailing. Fresh-water pockets were encountered continually, making a constant trim difficult to maintain. Fraser, handling his craft magnificently, was even obliged to blow the

Consider your verdict

by

RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B



It was raining again as Mr. Bush peered out at his prized garden. Already there were pools of water on his neat gravel paths and well-kept lawns, but he consoled himself with the thought that it would soon drain away.

His neighbour, Mr. Tree, was also staring moodily at the rain. His land was on a lower level, and in addition to his share of raindrops, he could see a little cascade of water pouring through the fence from the higher garden next door.

Tree turned to his wife. "I shall have to do something about all that water running in from old Bush's garden," he said. "I'll tackle it next weekend."

Next Saturday morning, Tree collected some old bricks, bought some cement, and started to build a wall along his side of the fence.

He made a good job of it. First, he dug a trench about eighteen inches deep. Then he built his wall, until it showed about three inches above the ground. To finish it off, he nailed a strip of zinc along the foot of the fence, and painted it the same colour as the wood.

Bush was away for the weekend; even when he came back on Sunday evening he didn't notice his neighbour's handiwork.

When the next downpour came along, Tree viewed the result with pride. "Look, dear," he told his wife, "not a drop of water from next door. You won't get your precious plants washed away now." He was interrupted by a bellow from Bush, who was standing in his own garden—nearly up to his knees in water.

"What on earth have you been playing at, Tree?" raged Bush. "Messing around with the fence! My garden's flooded because the rain water can't run away."

Tree was polite, but firm. "I built the wall in my garden to protect my land," he said. "You really can't expect me to stand by and see my flower-beds washed away. I'm afraid you'll have to make your own arrangements for getting rid of the water. It's your problem now."

Bush took the matter to court. He claimed that Tree had no right to stop the water from naturally draining away. Tree, on the other hand, repeated to the judge what seemed to him a very logical argument. He was simply protecting his own property.

What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, see page 40

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OUT THURSDAY OCT. 8

main ballast tanks, the internal trimming tanks being found to be inadequate. In spite of his skill, XE3 broke surface for a few hectic seconds when less than a mile from the cruiser. Two hours later, a motor boat passed immediately overhead. Its engines were revving ominously fast; for a minute, the midget's crew waited glumly for the shock of the depth charge. Fortunately, none came, and the unpleasant drumming quickly faded.

In another fifty minutes the boom was reached; its gate was still open, and XE3 slipped through without incident. Thereafter, Fraser kept the craft at thirty feet till he surfaced at 21.00 hours and proceeded on the engine. He had just cleared the entrance to Johore Strait. Virtually, the midget was out.

Conduct Beyond Praise

At 23.30 hours a watch was set for the waiting Stygian; the submarine was called by radio every thirty minutes. Just before midnight her welcome green light was sighted; the two craft closed and proceeded together. Four hours later, early on the morning of August 1, a tow was passed and Stygian took Fraser and his weary men aboard. They had been on duty for fifty-two hours with—apart from "cat naps"—no sleep whatever.

The conduct of Fraser and Magennis had been beyond praise; that of Smith and Reed scarcely less so. The latter had been at the helm for thirty hours, during which the midget had been submerged for sixteen and a half hours at a stretch. Smith's handling of the hydroplanes in waters of constantly changing density was a model of alertness and skill.

Exhausted but happy, the men sat down to the best meal Stygian could provide. They did not know what had happened to the Takao, but they were glad that Fraser had pushed his attack home; Fraser knew that only a great team had made it possible.

The charges, in fact, exploded at 9.30 on the evening of the attack. They blew a sixty feet by thirty feet hole in Takao's hull, put her gun turrets out of action, damaged her range-finders and flooded several compartments. The cruiser was out of the war for good.

The second midget, XE1, commanded by Lieutenant Smart, which had left the submarine Spark to attack the Nachi, experienced bad luck the moment she entered Singapore Strait. Delayed by several encounters with surface vessels, Smart took his craft through the net boom ninety minutes after Fraser, although his target lay two miles beyond Takao.

Second Midget's Attack

This loss of time made it impossible for him to attack his target and pass the net-boom before it closed that night. He accordingly dropped his charges alongside Takao, it now being impossible—the cruiser was nearly fully aground on the falling tide—to force his craft under her hull.

Smart and his men acted with great courage here, for their manoeuvres round the cruiser might well have operated the disturbance fuse of Fraser's charge and blown XE1 to pieces. Smart's misfortunes did not end there. The time-lag that had ruined his attack made him too late for his rendezvous with the parent submarine, and XE1 spent an uncomfortable twenty-four hours ranging round the straits till picked up by Spark the following night. Eventually all four submarines got back to base safely.

Decorations awarded for Operation Struggle included the Victoria Cross for Fraser and Magennis; the D.S.O. for Jack Smart and "Kiwi" Smith; a C.G.M. for Reed; one D.S.C., two D.S.M.s, two M.B.E.s and three Mentions in Dispatches.

Operation Struggle and some undersea cable-cutting operations which took place at the same time were the last midget submarine actions to take place. The two flotillas in which X-craft had been incorporated—the 12th and 14th—were paid off and their members dispersed. The operation of human torpedoes, or chariots, had come to an end in October, 1944, with the attack by two of the new Mark II torpedoes on Japanese shipping in the Malacca Strait. So, very brusquely, the fighting history of small submersibles was closed.

Between them, X-craft and human torpedoes accounted for nearly 100,000 tons of enemy shipping in half a dozen offensive operations, but their ultimate value has to be assessed on other, and wider, considerations. The effect on the enemy of the attack on the Tirpitz; the increased safety of the Arctic convoys; the sinking of the Bergen floating dock; the loss of the Italian cruisers Ulpio Traiano and Bolzano; the cutting of the Tokio-Singapore deep-sea cable, which deprived the Japanese of one of their last and most important means of communication in the Far East—the result of these and other exploits can never be computed in terms of weights and measures. The midgets and chariots hit the Axis hard, and they hit it all over the world.

All this was accomplished for the loss of thirteen lives on operations out of a total of about 180 officers and men sent against the enemy. Sixteen men died in training and ten were lost on passage in a "big" submarine. The final count was thirty-nine casualties out of approximately three hundred operational personnel. For what was achieved, these losses compare favourably with the record of any other arm.

These small craft were a revolutionary addition to naval strategy. Their inspiration was the extraordinary spirit of a few score young men who took new and untried weapons into unknown dangers. They fought against more than their country's enemies. They contended with the hazards of depth and with sudden death by oxygen poisoning; with the thousand risks attending the operation of new techniques; with the discouragement of fighting alone; with appalling strain and fatigue, and, always and everywhere, with the unrelenting malice of the sea. THE END

The book version of "Above Us The Waves" is published by Harrap & Co. Ltd. at 15s.

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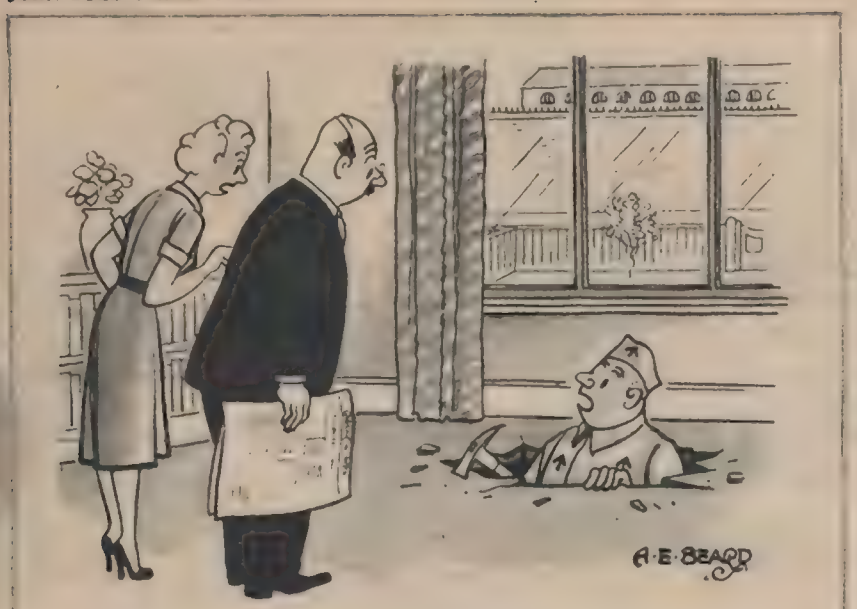


"Sorry! When they put me in, this was waste ground"

DEATH AND THE SKY ABOVE

Continued from page 17

hoped, it turned out to be the Spile buoy. He felt encouraged—so far, the calculations he had made on the island had worked out well. He called softly to Kathryn and she woke at once and came into the cockpit.

"Feeling better?" he asked her.

"I'm a new woman," she told him, with a bright morning smile. She sat down beside him, slipping her arm through his and momentarily scanning his face. Then she looked round at the lowering sky and the heaving waste of water, and her smile faded. "How are we doing?"

"Not too badly. I think that must be Warden Point over there."

She followed the direction of his finger and gave an involuntary shiver. The land was no more than a shadowy outline, a very long way away.

"At least, the water's a lot smoother now," she said.

"Yes, there's not so much wind. If it drops any more I suppose we'll have to use the engine, but I think we're all right for the moment—the tide should be taking us the way we want to go. Do you feel like steering for a bit?"

"Of course, darling—you must be dead."

"Not yet!" he said grimly. He gave her the tiller. "If you keep the compass needle around a hundred and ten you won't go far wrong."

"When shall I call you?"

"Eight o'clock—not later. Give me a shout if there's any trouble."

She nodded, and he stumbled below.

He was awakened just before eight by the incongruous sound of a B.B.C. announcer's voice from the cockpit—Kathryn was listening to the shipping forecast on the portable radio. From what he could hear of it, the outlook had deteriorated, and when he sat up and tapped the barometer, his impression was confirmed. He scrambled out of his bag and went on deck.

The sky certainly looked much more menacing. It was almost as dark now as it had been at six, and away to the north there were rumblings that sounded like thunder. The wind had dropped to the lightest of light airs, and Witch was ghosting over a calm and oily sea. There were one or two steamers hull-down on the horizon, but Charles could see no sign of any seamarks.

"Any idea where we are?" he asked, glancing at the compass.

"Not really," Kathryn confessed. "I did see a buoy about an hour ago, but it wasn't near enough for me to read the name."

He studied the chart for a few moments but failed to come to any definite conclusion. The shore was even farther away now, flat and featureless. He had a notion that they must be off the mouth of the Swale, but, if so, they had made very poor progress lately.

"I think we'd better start the engine," he said.

At the second swing the engine sprang into life, but after it had run for a few minutes it gave a cough and died away with a depressing rattle of the starting chain.

Charles thought he knew what the trouble was—there must be an airlock in the pipe. He tried blowing through the filler-cap of the petrol tank, but the lock didn't clear and, reluctantly, he got out the tools. The knowledge that today he couldn't afford to make a mistake made him nervous, and it took him a long while to unscrew and reassemble the pipe. By the time he had finished, the cockpit reeked of petrol and he was filthy in appearance and temper.

He flooded the carburettor and flung himself on the handle, turning until he was exhausted. The thing remained obdurately dead. At last he sat back on his heels, nursing his blisters, while Kathryn regarded him anxiously. In a situation like this she felt helpless, and she knew that silence was better than suggestion.

He continued to gaze at the engine as though it were a malevolent monster, trying to remember what Peter had told him to do in a case like this. By now, Witch had lost almost all her way and was slowly drifting on the tide with drooping sails. They were wasting valuable time, and if he couldn't get the damn' thing going, they might be here for hours. Perhaps he'd over-flooded her.

He took the plug out and cleaned it and turned the handle a few times to clear the cylinder, and when he put it back the motor started at once and ran sweetly. He gave Kathryn a rather sheepish smile. Though the engine was noisy and made conversation difficult in the cockpit, the sound was like music in their ears.

He washed the oil from his hands and took the tiller while Kathryn went below to prepare breakfast. It was their first proper meal for a long time, and she made it a good one—bacon and eggs and marmalade, and coffee brewed in a jug.

The hot food heartened her, but Charles became more and more silent as the meal progressed, and presently she could stand it no longer.

"What's wrong, darling?" she asked.

"Only the weather! It's lunacy to stay out here in a small boat with the glass dropping like a stone."

She gazed round at the quiet pewter-coloured water, the heavy, almost motionless banks of cloud. "It doesn't look too bad."

"This is the calm before the storm—the barometer doesn't lie. I'm wondering if we oughtn't to try to reach the

More people drink

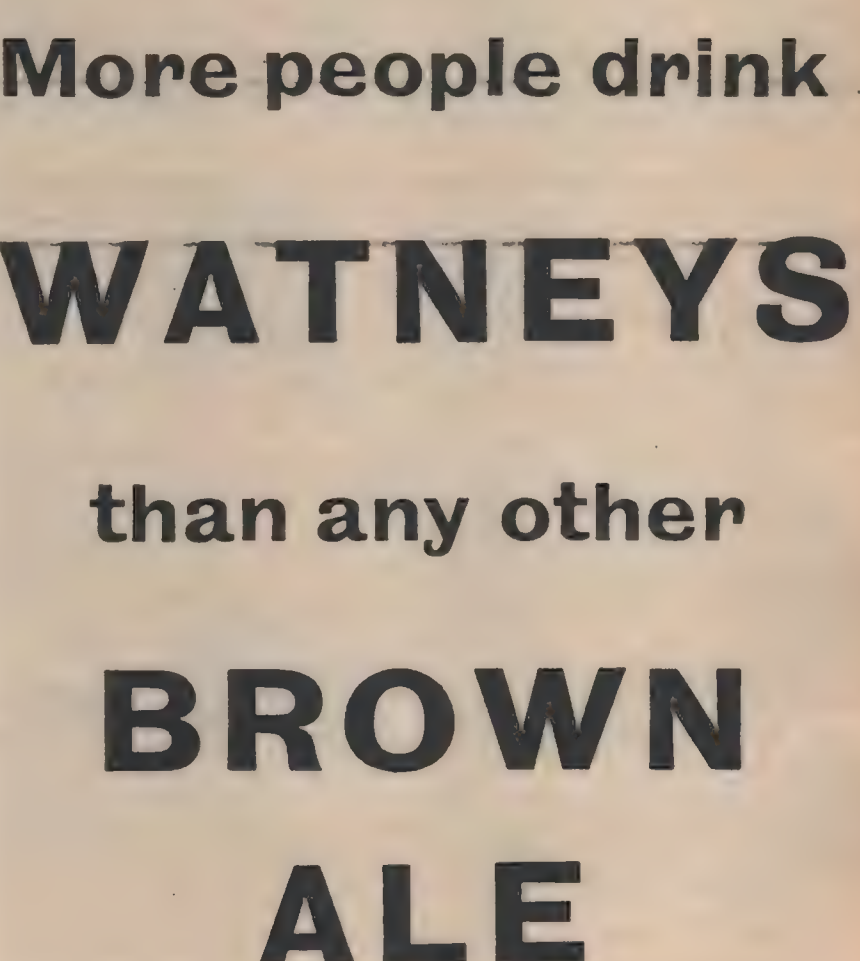
WATNEYS

than any other

BROWN

ALE

HAVE YOU TRIED IT?



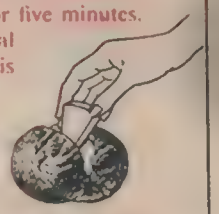
FROM THE KRAFT HOME COOK

Ideas for Savoury Snacks

made with Dairylea, the *rich-in-milk* cheese spread by Kraft

Farmhouse baked potatoes

Who doesn't like potatoes baked in their jackets! But try them this way: bake potatoes in the normal way, then, about five minutes before they are ready, remove from the oven, make a slit in each, and put in a portion of Dairylea. Return to oven for five minutes. Delicious, and a meal in itself. Dairylea is a cheese *food*.



FOR LOTS OF PEOPLE, the pleasantest meal of the day is the evening snack—something that's no trouble to prepare and is *satisfying* at the end of the day.

Here are some ideas for you to ring the changes a little—so easy, and not only wonderfully good-tasting, but extra sustaining, because they're made with Dairylea, the cheese spread by Kraft that's rich in whole milk.

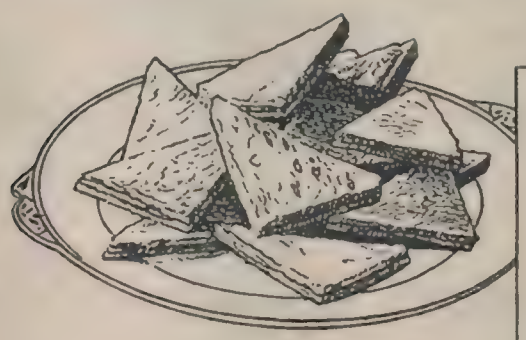
Did you know that every ounce of Dairylea contains more of milk's vital food values than a good-size glass of milk? More high-quality protein, more fat. Dairylea cheese spread is rich in butter too.

You can be sure when you serve Dairylea to your family that you're giving them a nutritious dairy *food*. And who doesn't love that delicious, *unmistakable* "buttery" flavour of Dairylea that tells you at once it's made with *real* butter, and all the goodness of milk?

Dairylea is more plentiful now—fortunately, for it's without any doubt the finest cheese spread on the market today. It's made, of course, by Kraft, the world's greatest name in cheese. Ask your grocer for Dairylea—now only 1/3 for a six-portion box; ½-lb. size now only 2/3.

"OPEN" Sandwiches are so easy!

Try these tonight. If you use French bread, as here (but they're just as good with a plain loaf), cut the slices on the slant. Spread each thinly with margarine, then Dairylea, and top with a slice of tomato and a lettuce leaf. Dairylea, rich in milk, is not only the most delicious cheese spread, it's a nourishing *food*.

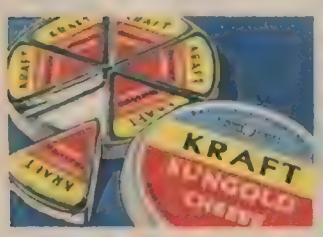


They're sweet!

These sandwiches are real tempters. Mix mashed banana and Dairylea together, and spread. That's all—but *how* good! Or mix strawberry jam and Dairylea, or marmalade and Dairylea, as a sandwich spread. Any of these fillings are specially good with brown bread. Dairylea is a wonderful standby for tea-time or for evening snacks; it's so pleasing to the taste, *and* so sustaining!

More of milk's vital food values than in a glass of milk

There are actually more of milk's vital food values in every ounce of Dairylea than in a good-size glass of milk! There's more first class body-building protein and more fat. Dairylea is rich, too, in energy-giving carbohydrates: and it's so digestible that even a child of a year can eat it. This delicious, nourishing cheese food is perfect for snacks at any time of the day. It's more plentiful now—so you can ask your grocer for it and enjoy Dairylea often.



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Swale and shelter till the storm's over. All hell may break loose soon."

"It can't be worse than the hell we've been through already."

"You may be drowned. I'm risking your life, and I don't think I've the right to."

"We went over all that before."

"We didn't know then that the weather was going to let us down. Now we do."

"It may not be as bad as you think. Besides, aren't there any other places where we could shelter if we had to—farther along?"

"It may be too late then."

"I'd sooner take a chance. Come on, drink your coffee and stop worrying."

He said no more, but she saw that he was still very troubled. Presently he climbed up on to the cabin top and tucked a precautionary reef in the mainsail. In a flat calm that was a simple matter, even for him. Later, it might be impossible.

As the morning wore on, he began to believe that they might be lucky after all. Though the roll of distant thunder was now incessant, and the peaked, purple clouds were shot with lightning flashes, the storm seemed unable to break.

Just before eleven, he made out the black and white chequers of the Horse, which marked the entrance of the deep-water channel called the Gore. As the tide slackened, their pace slowed, but by noon they were abreast of Margate and still going well. Kathryn, coming up from a spell below, was astonished at the progress they'd made.

"How far to Dover now?" she asked.

Charles considered. "About forty miles, I suppose."

"And how far have we come?"

"About thirty."

"Why, we're doing fine, darling."

He grunted.

At that moment, the rain started. There were a few warning plops on the deck, splashes the size of half-crowns, and suddenly the sky cracked open. Kathryn dived for Charles's oilskins and thrust them at him. Then she crouched inside the cabin, watching the water sheeting past the door. The sight was impressive; the noise as it struck the cabin top was so great that she could barely hear the engine any more. Outside, an opaque curtain closed down over the sea, cutting visibility to feet. The sails hung like sodden rags.

"Oh—the *electricity* meter! That's in the kitchen"

CHARLES cowered by the tiller, taking the full force of the vertical shafts of rain and steering by the compass when he could see it. Water filled his ears and eyes, sluiced off his sou'wester, trickled down his neck, poured into his sea-boots. The bilge rose so quickly that he feared it might reach the engine, and he called Kathryn out to pump.

For more than half an hour the deluge continued without respite. Then it stopped as suddenly as it had begun, leaving the air cooler. But the storm hadn't passed. The sky was a little lighter overhead, but there was no sign of a break in the clouds and the thunder continued to circle around.

While Kathryn mopped up, Charles hauled in the almost waterlogged dinghy and baled it out. Then he tried to discover where they had got to. There was a buoy some distance astern of them, which they must have passed during the rainstorm, but he couldn't identify it. After a little hesitation, he put the boat about and ran back to read the name. He was glad he had done so, for it proved to be the Longnose, and that meant a change of course.

He swung the boat's head round again, and they began to run down the eastern coast of Thanet.

There was still no breath of wind to stir the sails, and by now the tide was turning against them. Witch's speed was soon reduced to a mere knot or two, and for hours they seemed to be looking at an unchanging landscape. The bad weather had driven all the holidaymakers off the beaches and the shore had a desolate appearance.

Just after two o'clock, Charles touched Kathryn's arm and pointed away to the starboard where a stone jetty girdled a forest of masts. "That must be Ramsgate Harbour," he shouted above the engine noise.

"Keep going!" she called back. "We're all right." She attempted a bar of her sailing theme-song, which had never failed to wring a sardonic smile from Charles in the past—"Where ignorance is bliss. . . ." But this time he could manage nothing but a grimace in response.

The afternoon passed slowly and monotonously. They took short, regular turns at the tiller, for the seat in the cockpit was hard and the steering position cramping.

In the early evening a light breeze sprang up from the north-east and the sails, now almost dry, billowed out gracefully once more. With a sigh of thankfulness, Charles switched off the engine and a blessed peace descended upon the boat. Witch seemed a bit sluggish under her shortened mainsail, but the tide was beginning to push her along again, and Charles decided to wait a little before making any change.

Before long, he was glad he had done so, for the breeze quickly freshened and the seas began to whip up with dramatic suddenness. This, he thought grimly, was what the glass had prophesied. He saw an unbroken wall of slanting rain advancing upon them, and took a bearing on a buoy which he thought must be the North-East Goodwin. Then the weather closed down, and seamarks and landmarks alike were blotted out. Whitefaced and sick, Kathryn was presently forced to retire to the cabin. Charles wrestled with the tiller and struggled to keep on course.

If they tried to run for shelter now, they would probably only pile up ashore. Somehow, they'd got to stick it out.

The rainstorm passed, but the wind continued to strengthen, and every moment the sea became more confused. Witch was plunging and rearing like a restive horse. Astern, the dinghy was careering about wildly, straining and tugging at its painters. In the gusts it was as much as Charles could do to hold the sheet, and he realized with dismay that even the reefed sail might be too much for the boat before long.

He could hardly believe that the sea could have gathered such fury in so short a time. By now it was an amazing spectacle—a tossing wilderness of grey and white, smoking with spume. Savage gusts whipped the foam from the wave-tops and filled the air with flying, blinding spray. Water and sky were indistinguishable, and soon he had lost all track of their position.

They were somewhere between the Goodwin Sands and the coast—that was all he knew; and probably dangerously near the shore, because the wind was blowing them steadily towards it. He steered farther out to sea in an attempt to make up for the leeway, but he no longer felt that he had the situation under control.

So far, Witch had shipped very little water over the stern, but the waves were rolling down on her like hungry animals, and sometimes it seemed that the dinghy, towering above the cockpit, would be swept aboard. Charles watched it with growing apprehension as it climbed and plunged and sheered about. Suddenly the end came. There was a loud crack, and two bits of shredded rope hung from the stern. Tender to Witch had gone, and there was no chance whatever of picking her up.

KATHRYN heard the noise and peered anxiously out of the cabin. "What was that?"

"The dinghy's gone."

"Oh." She looked at him blankly. "What shall we do?"

"Just carry on. We could never have used it anyway in a sea like this."

She nodded. She looked very sick.

The boat gave a sudden lurch as a fresh blast struck the board-hard sail, and for a moment she lay almost on her beam ends. From the cabin came a succession of slithering crashes and a cry from Kathryn as gear and stores burst adrift.

Charles let the sheet run out and braced his feet against the side of the cockpit. The boat was labouring frightfully, the mast was bending under the weight of the bellying sail. God, this was awful! Grey-faced, he looked across the streaming cabin-top. Somehow, he'd *got* to get the sail down. He tried to think of the drill. If he turned the boat's head into the wind and held on to the boom. . . .

At that moment the problem was settled for him. Another gust came screaming out of the sky and, with a report like a cannon, the mainsail blew out. Instantly the boat became a wild confusion of flogging canvas, while flying ribbons streamed away to leeward.

He shouted to Kathryn, and as she staggered to the tiller he bent to the engine and cranked it. Miraculously, it started at the first turn and kept going.

"Keep her into the wind," he yelled. "I've got to get that sail!"

With Kathryn's agonized *"Be careful!"* in his ears, he forced himself to climb up on to the heaving cabin roof and scramble forward on his hands and knees to the mast. The boom had come amidships now that Witch was head-to-wind and he steadied himself against it, winding his legs round the wooden tabernacle while the remnants of the torn sail flailed around his head.

He groped blindly for the halyard, cast it off by touch, and gave a savage jerk at the canvas. Suddenly the sail came down with a rush, enveloping him. He fought it as though it were a living monster, subduing it foot by foot. As he got the lashings round it, Kathryn managed to lift the swinging boom into its crutches and furl the slatting foresail with a pull on the cord. Then a big sea lifted the boat's bows and tumbled him, soaked and gasping, into the cockpit.

The immediate crisis was over, but he knew that they were still in mortal danger. Now that the steadying influence of the sail was lost there was nothing to check the wild motion of the boat. The pitching became much worse—every few seconds the stern was lifted clean out of the water and the propeller raced uselessly, so that it was difficult to keep way on her. By now, Charles had abandoned all thoughts of holding a course and was content to steer straight into the eye of the wind.

HE looked at Kathryn's huddled figure and his salt-caked face twisted into a grin.

"Some people do this sort of thing for fun!" he shouted.

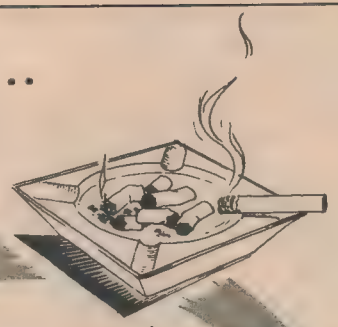
She tried hard to smile in response. She had been desperately afraid when he had been up on the cabin top. She knew that he wasn't equipped, in strength or knowledge, for the ordeal they were going through.

As dusk closed down on the heaving water, the wind moderated a little and, in spite of everything, they began to feel more hopeful. The waves were still hammering at the hull and breaking over the bows in shattering explosions of foam, but the boat wasn't being flung about quite so much, and if she hadn't foundered by now, after all this punishment, there was no reason why she shouldn't stand up to anything—provided the engine kept going.

Charles went below and lit the gimballed cabin lamp, but there was no possibility of lighting the navigation lamps. Not that it mattered much—being run down was one of the lesser risks now. He stared out into the featureless night, searching in vain for the guiding flash of a buoy. They must have travelled miles since his doubtful identification of the North-East Goodwin—but in which direction?

Suddenly, from somewhere astern of them, he heard a sound that jerked him into action—a sound that rose above the clatter of the engine and the moaning of the wind. Fearfully, he peered into the swirling darkness. It sounded like the crash of breakers. He waited for a moment, gripping Kathryn's arm, and then the thundering roll burst upon his ears again, louder and nearer. It *was* breakers. In that instant he knew that what he had been most afraid of had happened. Although the boat's head had been pointing out to sea, the engine hadn't been powerful enough to overcome the

For the normal occasion...



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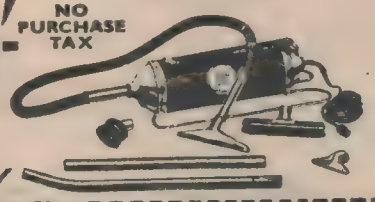

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BRANCHES IN MOST PRINCIPAL TOWNS

pressure of the wind. They were being blown ashore!

Once more he thrust the tiller into Kathryn's hands and rushed forward over the cabin top. There could be no hesitation now—the next thirty seconds might decide their fate. A sudden plunge almost flung him into the sea, but he grabbed the mast just in time and regained his balance and dropped to his knees on the heaving foredeck. He clung there for a moment, waiting for his opportunity, and, as the boat steadied itself, he heaved up the thirty-pound anchor and hurled it overboard. The chain rattled out fast—fifteen fathoms, twenty, perhaps more.

The breakers were nearer, much nearer—he could make out the line of foam. Then there came a jerk and the rattling stopped—the chain was all out. He hung on to the mast, watching the shore. Nearer—or not? For a while he wasn't sure. Then he gave an encouraging shout and scrambled back into the cockpit. The anchor was holding!

It had been a near thing, though—in the troughs their keel must be almost touching the bottom. He tried to consider their plight without panic. The wind *was* dropping—in an hour they might be safe if only they could ride it out. But could they? Every time Witch rose on a wave, the bows snubbed on the chain with a jolt that shook the ship. If that continued, something was bound to give way. Perhaps he'd better get the second anchor from the fore peak and have it in readiness.

He turned towards the cabin just as the bows rose again. There was a hideous jolt, and suddenly the snubbing ceased. He knew then that it was too late to do anything. The chain had parted.

Now they were driving straight ashore, and a moment later, Witch struck with an impact that knocked them off their feet. She was held, shuddering, as the water receded, and then a new wave lifted her and she raced forward and struck again. A breaker came roaring over the bows and burst in a blinding sea of foam. The engine spluttered and died. As the boat crashed down on the hard sand there was a rending, splintering smash as though a box had been dropped from a height.

Charles yelled to Kathryn to hang on, and dived below through boiling surf. The life-jackets were still hanging on their peg. He grabbed them and staggered out. The pounding was incessant, and he knew the ship must break up soon. Seas hammered and raged around and above them. Breasting the surging water, he jammed one of the jackets over Kathryn's head and fastened the strings with numbed fingers. Then he struggled into the other one.

THE breakers were carrying the stricken boat ever closer in. Kathryn gave a shout of warning as a wave, larger than any yet, towered above them and broke with the force of an avalanche. Charles had just time to grab her wrist before they were swept from the cockpit and carried shorewards on the surging crest.

At that point, thought ended. Water enveloped them, pressing them down, roaring in their ears. Something hit Charles a violent blow in the chest and he had to loose his grip. He kicked out with bursting lungs, hampered by his sea-boots, helped by his jacket. As he broke surface, he gulped air and looked frantically about him. Kathryn was still at his side, striking out on her own. A moment later, he felt the ground under him, and yelled to her to keep going. Another wave broke over them, hurling them flat, battering them against the sand, but when its fury was spent they were nearer their goal. Half drowned, fighting for life, they still struggled forward side by side. Then they were clawing their way up a pebbly beach, out of reach of the waves. Bits of the boat's gear followed them in.

For a while, they lay gasping on the stones, too exhausted to speak, too battered and bruised to think. Only as strength returned did their minds begin to function again, and then they knew that they had suffered irreparable disaster. Kathryn threw herself against Charles and burst into uncontrollable weeping.

He gathered her in his arms and held her close, but no words of comfort came to him. As he gazed out through the noisy darkness at the wreck of their hopes, everything seemed at an end.

Presently her sobs ceased and she sat up, pushing her tangled hair out of her eyes. "I'm sorry, darling," she said. "I just couldn't help it."

"Do you feel better?"

"I'm quite all right now."

"At least, I put you ashore!"

"Don't, I can't bear it. . . . Where do you think we are?"

"I've no idea. Somewhere in Kent."

She looked around. "There's a light up on the cliff—there may be a road. Do you think we're far from Dover?"

"I don't know—not very far, perhaps. Does it make any difference?"

"Of course it does. If I could reach Dover, I could get my suitcase from the cloakroom and tidy up and then I could go and fetch the car. . . . Charles, we've got to go on trying—we can't give up now."

"How could you get up to town? You've no money."

SHE thrust her hand into the pocket of her windcheater. "I have—money and passport and everything. I put it here for safety."

"That certainly helps," he said, but his tone was still apathetic. "Suppose you did manage to get the car—where would we go?"

"Anywhere, for the moment. Back to the cottage. After all, the police aren't on your track—they don't know what's happened to you."

"They'll know in the morning, as soon as the wreck's reported. They'll probably find some of my belongings strewn along the beach, and that will settle it."

"They may think you've been drowned."

He sat watching the surf hammering at the pitiful hulk on the beach, and suddenly his mood of resignation left him. "By God, Kathryn, I believe you're right—there *may* still be a chance."

"Perhaps a better one than ever," she said eagerly, "because if they do think so, they'll stop looking for you. The newspapers will say you're dead and everyone will lose interest."

She jumped up. "I think I ought to start now—it must be getting on for midnight, and we don't know how far I'll have to go. What about you, darling? Oughtn't we to find a safe place for you to hide?"

"I suppose so. God, how I wish I didn't have to leave everything to you! Still, I can walk with you till daybreak—there can't be many people about now."

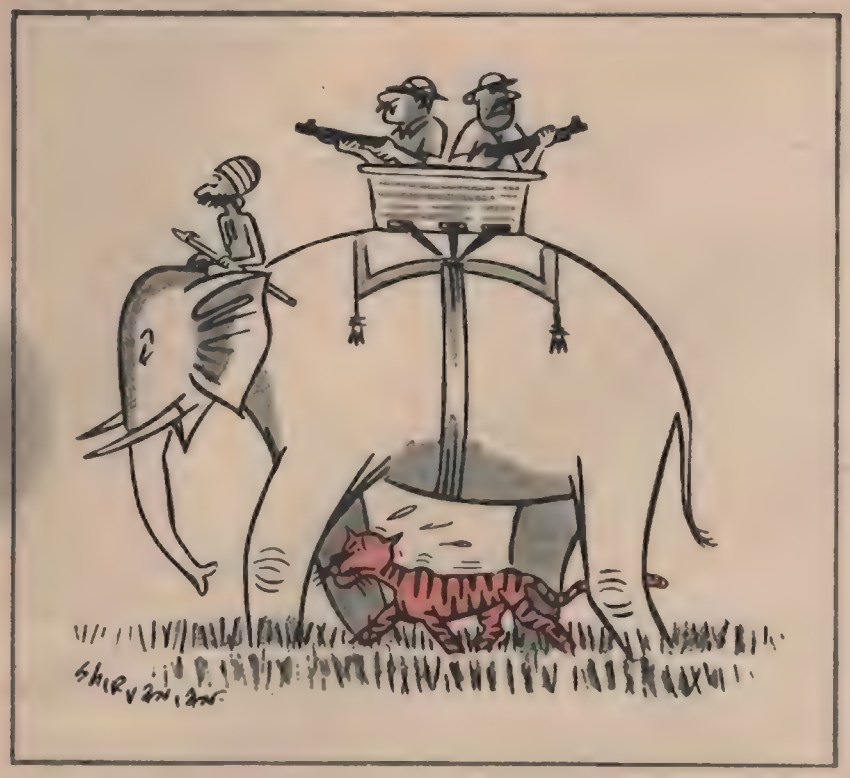
"We'll have to be careful about car headlights—we must look awfully like survivors." She ran a comb through her hair and tried to squeeze some of the water out of her clothes. "What shall we do with the life-jackets?"

"Take them with us and push them into a ditch, I should think." He gathered them up and stuffed them under his arm. Then they set off slowly along the beach.

By now the wind had dropped to a mere zephyr, but the air was cool and

Consider your verdict

MR. BUSH left the court in triumph after the case on page 34. Mr. Tree had to pay damages—and pull down his carefully built wall. The judge pointed out that rain water, in law, is allowed to follow its natural drainage course, so that Bush could not be blamed for its effects on his neighbour's garden. Tree was told he could take what steps he liked to stop the damage—but he must not place a greater burden of water on somebody else's land. (*This is the probable decision, based on actual cases.*)



they were both glad to be on the move again. They picked their way cautiously over the pebbles, avoiding any patches of sand until they were well away from the wreck. Presently, Kathryn pointed to a gap in the chalky cliff. They scrambled up on to a smooth, grassy slope, and a moment later they had reached the road.

It was a typical seaside "front," with a wide paved promenade, and flower-beds set in short turf, and pavilions, and a row of huge Victorian hotels on the side away from the sea. Neither of them recognized the place, but, whatever it was, there was no doubt about the direction they must take. They turned southwards, stepping out quickly to keep warm. Once or twice a car passed them, but the approaching headlights gave them plenty of warning, and they dropped to a lovers' stroll until the danger was over.

AFTER a mile or so the road they were on turned sharply inland. They had no choice but to follow it. Already they were beginning to flag—Charles still wore his sea-boots, which were clumsy and squelched water at every step, and Kathryn's sodden shoes were threatening to raise blisters. They talked little, conserving their strength. Presently they passed through a small village and came out on another road, a much wider one. At the T-junction there was a signpost. One finger, pointing northwards, said, "Deal 3." The other said, "Dover 5."

Kathryn gave a sigh of thankfulness. Five miles wasn't much, even with a blister. The problem now was different—how and where to pass the night. There was no point in arriving in Dover before the station cloakroom opened.

They plodded on at a slower pace. The road was much more rural now, with fields and hedges on both sides. Charles was still hugging the life-jackets, looking for a place to hide them. Suddenly he stopped by a farm gate, pointing to a haystack. "What about pushing them in there?"

They climbed the gate and approached the stack. It was an old one that had been knocked about a bit, and much of the hay was loose. It smelt delicious. Charles stuffed the jackets deep into the heart of the stack and then looked thoughtfully around. There was no sign of any farmhouse.

"Why shouldn't we stay here?" he said. "We can keep warm in the hay and let our clothes dry, and it's a good spot for you to leave me in tomorrow. I shan't find a better hiding-place."

She agreed at once. Now that he'd suggested it, she knew that she couldn't walk another step.

Silently they stripped off their clothes and spread them out on the side of the stack away from the road. Then they crept naked into the hay. It was prickly and uncomfortable at first, but as they bedded down and ceased to move, the discomfort passed. In a little while they were warm and cosy, and presently they slept.

Just before daybreak, Charles stirred, and the movement roused Kathryn. She was fully awake on the instant, alarmed in case she had overslept. She pushed the hay aside and looked out at the pale sky.

"I must go," she said. "It'll soon be light." She wriggled out of her cocoon and dressed quickly. Her clothes were still damp and sticky from the salt water, and she shivered as she put them on, but she felt immensely refreshed by the night's rest.

She brushed bits of hay from her windcheater and tidied herself up as well as she could. "How do I look? Still like a survivor?"

"You'll get by."

"I hope so. Now, let's see—suppose there's a train to London between eight and nine. Say ten thirty at the flat—half an hour there—two hours to drive back. I should be here with the car soon after one."

"I'll be counting the minutes—but don't break your neck. And watch out for police—they may have begun to take an interest in you again by now."

"I'll be very careful. You, too! Don't show yourself, will you?"

"You needn't worry about that. I'll lie doggo."

"I'll bring some food with me."

He kissed her, and smiled. "I was going to say I don't know what I'd do without you, but I know only too well! Goodbye, darling. Good luck!"

WHEN she had gone, he returned to his burrow and lay there quietly thinking about his prospects. He still thought that Kathryn was probably right about the wreck—the police would almost certainly conclude that he'd been drowned in the storm. If they *did* write him off as dead, everything would be changed.

He looked out, and saw that it was almost daylight. He'd better get his clothes, or someone might notice them. He crawled out of his hole and dressed, and then he pulled some of the loose hay over him and lay watching the sun come up. It was going to be a fine day—the sort of day they should have had yesterday! He felt ravenously hungry, but he could see nothing fit to eat. There weren't even any blackberries in the hedge.

The hours passed uneventfully. As the sun grew warmer, he basked gratefully in its heat.

Suddenly he heard something that stirred unpleasant memories of his ghastly ordeal on the island—the barking of a dog nearby. He turned

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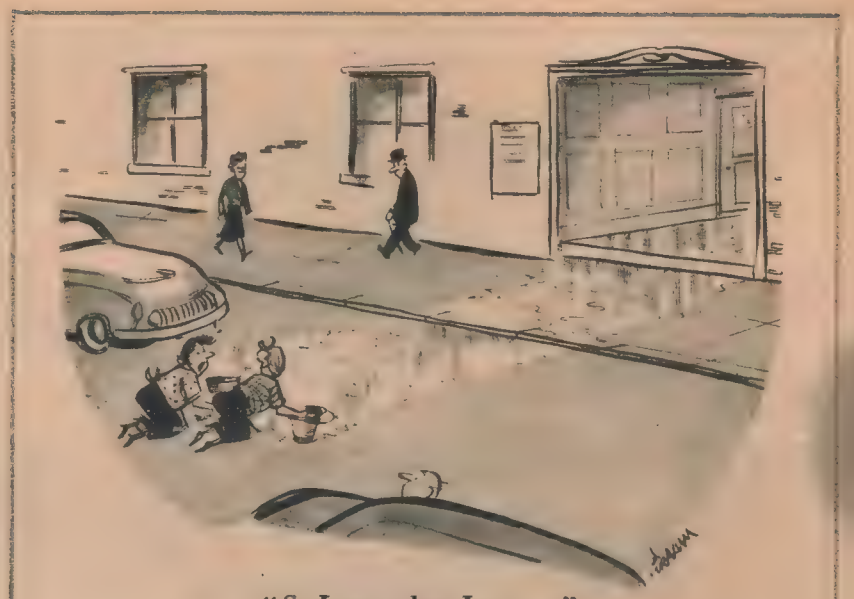

"So I sez to her, I sez . . ."

quickly in the direction of the noise and saw to his horror that a small boy was coming across the field towards him with a snapping terrier at his heels. They were clearly making for the gate.

Charles hesitated for a moment, then dived into the burrow where he had spent the night, pulling the hay down over the opening and lying motionless.

The yapping came nearer—receded—came nearer still. A moment later, the dog was snuffling at the opening, and the boy was shouting encouragement: "Go on, Spot! Get a rabbit!" Charles drew farther back into the hay, but the terrier was growing more and more excited. In desperation, he stuck his head out and tried to shoo it away, ferocious in face and gesture, but not daring to shout. The animal continued to bark and leap, its short tail wagging with pleasure at the size of its quarry. Just then, the boy came running up to join in the hunt. He stopped in his tracks, staring.

"Hallo!" he said, keeping his distance. He wore a tee shirt and shorts and looked about ten years old.

"Hallo," said Charles, emerging from the stack with what dignity he could manage.

The boy came a cautious step nearer. He had a fresh, intelligent face, and freckles. "Are you a tramp?"

"A sort of tramp," said Charles.

"You don't talk like a tramp."

"I'm on a walking tour."

The boy gazed at his crumpled, salt-stained clothes. "You're all wet!"

"Yes, I got caught in the rain—that's why I slept in the stack."

"You've made an awful mess of my dad's hay."

Charles tried to smile. "I'll tidy it up before I go."

The boy continued to stare at him. "I think I've seen you before, mister."

"I shouldn't think so," said Charles, fear tugging at his heart. He began moving towards the gate.

"I have, though," said the boy, pursuing him triumphantly, "and I know *where*. I saw your picture in the Sunday paper. A big picture . . . !"

Charles stopped edging away. Only action could save him now. He took a step forward and grabbed a slim wrist. "Now, listen to me. . . ." he said roughly.

A look of terror leapt into the child's eyes and, with a feeling of hot shame, Charles let the wrist go. If his neck depended on it, he couldn't bully the lad. He stood for a despairing moment, watching boy and dog scampering away across the field. Then he turned and climbed the gate into the road.

FOR Kathryn, all had gone smoothly. It took her an hour and a half to walk into Dover, and when she reached the station, her clothes were quite dry. She retrieved her suitcase, gave herself as good a grooming as possible and, twenty minutes later, caught a train to town. She did a bit of shopping on her way to the flat, made a flask of coffee there, collected the car, and by eleven was driving out of London again, just as she had planned. The journey passed without incident, and at ten minutes to one she parked the car opposite the haystack.

Keeping a careful lookout for approaching traffic, she leaned over the gate and softly called Charles's name. When she got no response, she thought he must be sleeping, and went in to rouse him. She poked about the hay, gazed across the field, anxiously scanned the hedgerow. He seemed to have disappeared without trace.

Mystified and deeply worried, she returned to the road. She couldn't begin to imagine what had happened. It was incredible that he should willingly have left the place in daylight, knowing the risk. Perhaps he'd seen someone approaching and decided to move to some other field. She gave a couple of loud toots on the car horn and waited hopefully, but after five minutes he still hadn't appeared.

SHE got back into the car and drove slowly along the road for about a mile, stopping at every gate and hooting loudly. When that produced no result, she repeated the process in the other direction. After that, she hardly knew what to do. Searching any further was hopeless, for she had no idea where to look.

She returned to the gate and parked the car on the grass verge and smoked a cigarette. By now, she was really frightened. She tried to put herself in his position, to think of some convincing reason why he should have gone, but no theory seemed to meet the case.

Three o'clock came, and four o'clock, and still there was no sign of him. Suddenly, in her agitation, a dreadful idea occurred to her—he might have been taken ill! It was true he'd seemed all right when she'd left him, but perhaps the long strain of the hunt and the exposure and the shock of that awful wreck had been too much for him—perhaps he'd wandered off without knowing what he was doing. If so, the only hope was to scour the whole district, cover every road. Desperately, she got out her map and planned a route.

During the next two hours she travelled nearly forty miles, along main roads and side roads and mere lanes. With every mile, the task appeared more hopeless. She felt completely worn out, absolutely beaten. Yet it was unthinkable that she should give up and just drive away.

She cruised slowly through the main streets of Deal, thinking that perhaps she ought to go back to the haystack, which was still their only rendezvous. Traffic lights ahead of her changed to red and she stopped by the kerb, mechanically examining the faces of the passers-by. There was a man selling newspapers on the corner, and as he held one out to a customer, a headline caught her eye. A huge headline:

"HILARY RECAPTURED"

To be concluded next week

MISS PATSY TO WIN

Continued from page 11

wasn't even out of earshot. He couldn't back his own dog for only two shillings, when he was backing hers for five. And perhaps bookies didn't take less than five shillings?

"Five to two, Shooting Star," chanted the bookie, grabbing his money. "Six to one, Pegasus."

Alfie took the tickets and went back to Miss Patsy, forcing his stiff face into a grin. One of his two pound notes gone already, and they'd not been here ten minutes! He shivered, but her hand touched his arm again, tightened.

"They're off!" she cried.

The race was over before Alfie realized what had happened. One minute his eyes were on the little boxes below there on the track. The doors opened and half a dozen dogs poured out. There was a lot of shouting, while Alfie tried to find out which was Pegasus, and before he succeeded, the race was over.

Miss Patsy turned her face to his, and said something, her green-flecked eyes round with surprise.

"Pegasus! You've won!"

He couldn't believe it. Won, at six to one—thirty shillings! He stepped down to the bookie, quickly, with his ticket. The bookie ripped a pound note and a ten-shilling note from the pile in his hand, added two half crowns out of a bag; and Alfie went back to Miss Patsy in a dream.

"That's a good start!" she cried, and stood against him as they examined the race card. "What're you doing this time, Alf?"

Not Alfie—Alf! He straightened his shoulders, and his voice was suddenly deeper. "Don't fancy any of these, Patsy: I'll pass, this time."

She didn't so much as blink an eyelid, and he'd called her Patsy!

"Orion," she decided, at last. "Mr. Michaelis told me to watch that, ages ago. Yes, five bob on Orion."

Again she made not the slightest sign of opening her bag, but he didn't mind, now he'd the money. Suppose Orion won—would the money be hers? It lost, and, shivering, Patsy nodded to the clubroom. Alfie took her there gladly. As the light faded, a keen wind blew up, cutting through his thin suit.

They walked up the terracing, and the floodlight was switched on, plunging everywhere beyond the stadium into a purple night: it was a sight to catch your breath.

THE clubroom was crowded: the long bar was lined with men buying drinks, there were short queues at the ticket windows of the Tote and groups of people at the great curve of glass commanding the track, many of them women in fur coats, nearly all drinking.

"Let's skip the next race, Alfie, and have a drink."

"All right. What'll you have?"

"Martini."

Alfie pushed his way into the crowd at the bar. At last the barmaid glanced towards him. The voice of a man by his side began to give an order, then stopped. "Sorry, old man—you were first."

"Thanks. A Martini, Miss, please, and a beer."

The barmaid stared at him. "Martini? D'you mean gin and Martini?"

Alfie hesitated. What was the difference? The voice came again in his ear. "Gin and Martini, old man."

Alfie repeated the words gratefully and turned to find an oldish man, with a silvery moustache, quietly dressed, well-spoken. The man nodded to where Patsy stood by the window, her black hair shining in the bright lights. "That's what she'll want."

He proved to be right. Patsy sipped her Martini contentedly, while Alfie pretended to enjoy his beer. "I've decided on Wonderboy," she said. "How about you?"

He nodded, walked to the queue at the Tote window. The man in front of him was the man with the silvery

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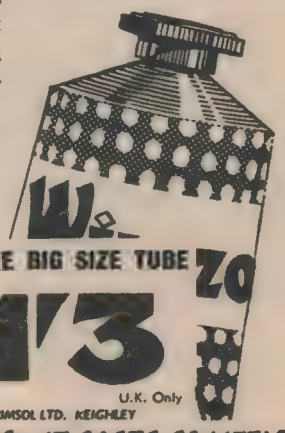

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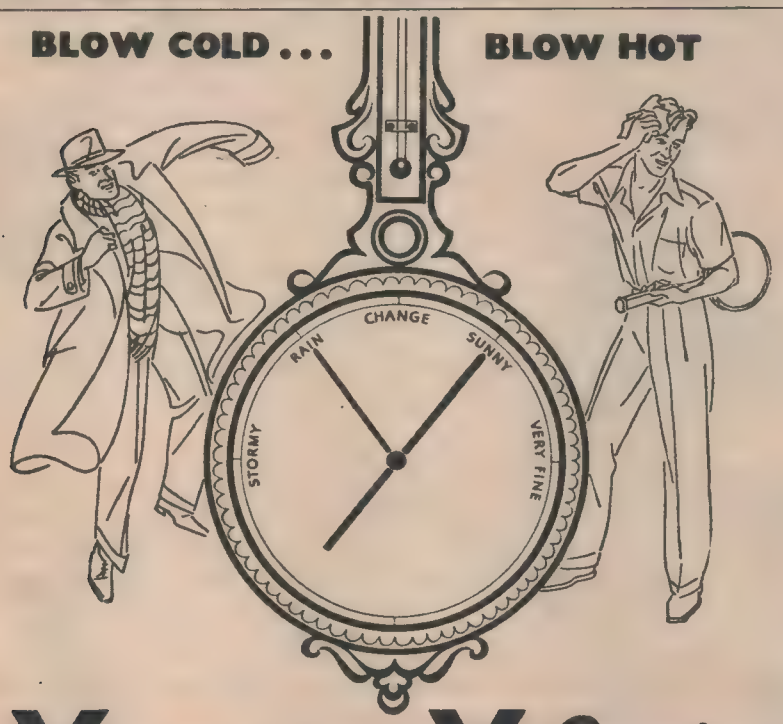

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moustache. "Got anything for this, old man?"

"Not exactly. We're backing Wonderboy."

The man pursed his lips, shook his head. "Don't fancy that. I'll stick to the trap number—always do, unless I've a good tip. I'm doing number one all tonight. This race its . . . Perivale."

Alfie had heard Sam say he sometimes chose a trap number and stuck to it all night. Fancy betting on the numbers, instead of the dogs! All the same, Perivale won. Alfie, turning back from the view of the track, looked at his card. Number One had won the second race, too. He took out a pencil, jotted down the numbers of each winning dog: 2, 1. . . . He paused. "What won the third race, Patsy?"

She pursed her red lips. "Can't remember."

All right, query the third race. 2. 1. ? 1. Number One had won twice already, but it wasn't that that made Alfie's eyes stare. Surely he'd seen those four numbers somewhere? His hand flew to his breast pocket. The thick wad of papers crinkled under his fingers. He wasn't thinking of the firm's sixty pounds now. His fingers closed on the wad of flimsies, with the sheet of notepaper from Michaelis.

He pulled it out and stared at the notepaper, his head swimming. 2. 1. ? 1. 5. 3. ? 3. 1.

There it was, the solution to the mystery, plain as could be. Sam always swore the races were "fixed." And if anybody knew the winners, Mr. Michaelis did. The queries, obviously, were the races he wasn't sure about. So the winner of the next race would be . . . Number Five.

Patsy's voice came through to him. "I think I'll back Cinderella."

Alfie looked down the card. Number Five was Lucky Break. Lucky Break! Could you have a luckier break than this! He heard his own voice, talking to her, confident, self-assured. "You take my tip, Patsy. Back Lucky Break."

She turned her green eyes on him, surprised. "Well, Alf, if you say so. . . ." It was delicious, having her look up at him in this way.

"I do say so." He walked over to the Tote window, swaying his shoulders slightly. When his turn came he spoke on impulse. "Pound on Lucky Break."

"Twenty shillings, Number Five," said the girl, and his ticket slid towards him. A pound! What had made him say that? A whole pound! But he couldn't miss, could he? If Mr. Michaelis didn't know, who did?

What was the price? The bookies were offering five to one. Alfie took Patsy's arm, boldly, and moved her to a better position at the window.

LUCKY BREAK won—easily. Alfie was nearly five pounds the richer! He could put all this on the next race, and even if it went down he would still be in pocket. It was a chance too good to miss. And this next race was marked "3." Number Three was Christobel. He looked down towards the bookies, at their boards. Seven to two. If he put all this five pounds on Christobel he would win eighteen pounds near enough. Eighteen pounds! He could buy himself a coat to go with this suit. He could take Patsy to the Hampton Dive. The things he could do with eighteen pounds, if he won. . . .

And now here were the crisp notes, in his hands, eighteen of them, with a handful of silver. Patsy's eyes were dancing at him.

"Alfie, let's have another drink."

"Yes—let's." The list showed a question mark for the next race, so he could take his time: they'd skip it. He felt he couldn't drink another beer, but he heard somebody ask for a gin "with plenty of orange," and when it came, the drink might have been orange squash, with ice floating on top. He got one for himself, a Martini for Patsy; they touched glasses before they drank.

"What a night!" she laughed. "Three winners you've had, and still two races to go. What're you doing for the next one?"

"The winner!" he boasted. He took a large drink of gin and orange. He looked at his race card and remembered the number on the list—Number Three. "Filigree: that's what I'm going to back."

She protested, laughing. "Filigree's the favourite—two to one! Not worth risking your money on. No, let's have Rotherham Beauty. I remember now—Sam told me they were saving it for a big win. It might be tonight. I think I'll risk ten bob."

She'd risk ten bob—when he was doing the paying! Still, he could afford ten shillings out of what he would win. "You have Rotherham Beauty if you like. I'm having Filigree."

It was extraordinary how her face changed when she drew her brows together. Her eyes narrowed, her mouth became thinner—no, she was smiling again. It must have been some trick of the light. Her eyes were enormous as she looked up into his face. "Well, you're the master punter, Alf—a blessed genius. I've never known anybody spot winners as you do." Her face was close to his and he could smell the fragrance of her hair. He drank the gin and orange again—delicious. This was the way to live.

SHE gave his arm a squeeze as he left her to go to the Tote window. "No good backing the favourite," she said, "unless you put plenty on. I think I'll have a couple of quid." This time she made a movement towards her bag, but he waved his hand and joined the queue at the window. Put plenty on. . . if only she knew!

All the same, she was right. Pity Filigree was only two to one; even if he put every penny on, twenty pounds, it was an awful risk to take, just to win forty.

Somebody bumped into him as he stood in the queue, counting out the twenty pounds: a tall man, who apologized. Alfie said "All right," genially—then his hand shot up to the breast pocket of his jacket, where the other money was, the sixty pounds belonging to the firm. Yes: a crackle under his hand reassured him.

The queue moved slowly. Alfie didn't notice, he was thinking so hard. This sixty pounds in his pocket—of course, he couldn't use that. Too risky. A phrase of Sam Ogle's came whirling into his mind, about a chap who'd lived next door to Sam, a bus-driver: *"Went straight through the night, six winners. Cleared a thousand pounds. All from ten bob on the first horse. Somebody tipped him off. . . ."*

Alfie rubbed his knuckles together, painfully. If only he'd known, that first race! By now he'd have a hundred pounds to put on, never mind twenty.

He moved nearer the window. You couldn't be certain, that was the trouble. Even if the races were fixed, accidents could happen. Suppose he used this sixty pounds, and the hundred-to-one-against accident turned up! Alfie winced as he saw the image of Mr. Cookson's angry face, the bloodshot, staring eyes—a police job, if you did that to the Guv'nor. Not for Alfie.

And yet . . . he felt he was losing

"Mum! Dad's resting again!"

a gigantic opportunity through lack of courage.

The man in front of him moved away. Alfie pushed his twenty pounds across the narrow counter. As the girl counted it, he remembered, in a flash of panic, he hadn't checked the list. His hand shot into his pocket, brought everything out—list, flimsies, paying-in book, cheques, notes, everything. Yes! Number Three.

He sighed with relief, looked at the bundle of notes before stuffing them back into his pocket. Sixty pounds, and he daren't use it. And in that moment Alfie saw the solution. He *could* guard against the chance of accident—spread the sixty pounds over this race and the next. Thirty pounds on each. They wouldn't both go down!

His voice was high and shrill as he spoke to the girl again. "And another thirty. Number Three. Filigree."

He hardly saw the race for the image of Mr. Cookson's big face, with the crawling red lines which glowed when he was angry. And he got angry so easily. What would he be like if he discovered that Alfie was using the firm's money to gamble with!

He stood by Patsy's side, shaking with the queerest mixture of fear and excitement. The hubbub around them dwindled. Everybody crowded to the window, looking down at the track. Alfie's eyes wouldn't focus properly. Everything seemed ghostly, unreal, in this brilliant floodlighting. Then Patsy gripped his arm: "They're off."

It was no good—Alfie's eyes must be deceiving him. That couldn't be Filigree, the dog which veered into the wire, almost rolled over, recovered too late, and was now chasing lengths behind the others. Or could it?

Patsy made a noise of anguish, her grip slackened on his arm. Her face, turning to him, was a white blob of disappointment. The dogs, across the tape, were slowing down. Then came Filigree—last. The big room hummed with surprise.

"You and your Filigree!" said Patsy. "I *told* you Rotherham Beauty."

ALFIE was too shocked to take it in properly. Patsy looked so strange, with her brows drawn, her mouth downturned, lips pursed. Thirty pounds—lost in a few seconds. The Guv'nor's thirty pounds. He tapped his breast pocket instinctively heard the crackle of the rest of the notes. He heard his voice, defensive. "Never mind. One more race—another chance. I'll put something on . . . what's Number One?"

She was smiling again, radiant. "I'll say this, Alf. You're a sportsman."

He watched her study the card. If he lost the remaining thirty pounds. . . . He stared through the thickening haze of tobacco smoke. His instinct was to take the money back to Mr. Cookson, explain what had happened, try and make amends. But what amends could he make? The Guv'nor would be just as furious over losing thirty pounds as losing sixty. . . .

Patsy was pulling at his arm. "Well I never! Look at the name of Number One! Miss Patsy!" Her face coloured with pleasure: she looked beautiful. "What a coincidence! My own name!"

Coincidence? It was an omen! Confidence stiffened Alfie. He felt he was rising to a great challenge. After all, it needed courage to take a decision like this, after the shock of the last race. He squared his shoulders.

"I'll go now, Patsy—there aren't many people at the windows. Then there'll be time for another drink. Stay right here."

When he got back from the bar with the drinks, the dogs were being paraded on the track. His spirits rose as he picked out Number One—full of fire, she looked. Patsy touched the rim of his glass with the rim of hers.

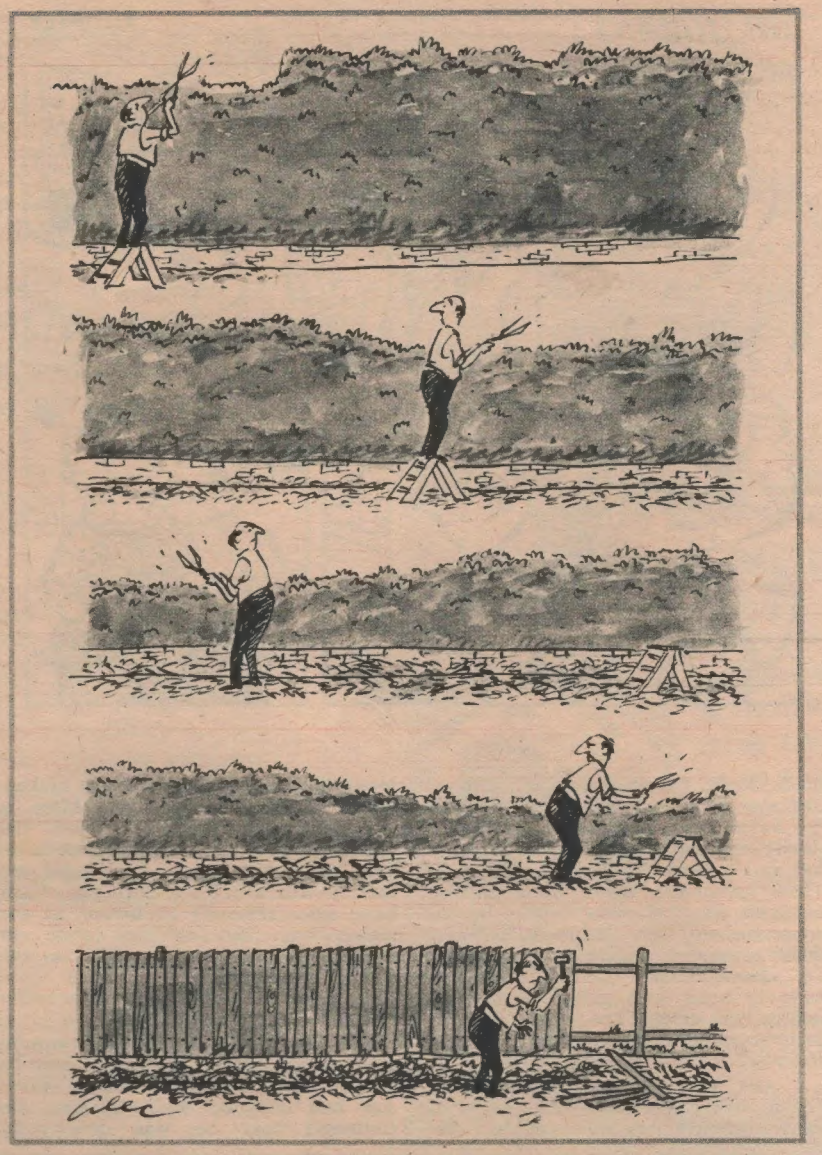
"Here's luck," she smiled.

He smiled back. "Miss Patsy—the winner!" he said, like somebody on the films.

"How much have you put on for me?"

"Wait and see," he told her.

She laughed and swung round, so



that her face was well below the level of his, upturned, full of pleasure and—admiration?

"Go on, Alf, tell me! How much?"

He had put everything he'd got on that dog, except for a few shillings worth of silver—thirty-two pounds. She could have the odd two pounds.

"Two pounds," he said. "You'll make a fiver."

Her expression of pleasure was drowned in the cry as the dogs leapt out of the boxes. "They're off!" Patsy swung round, and they clung together, looking through the glass.

Miss Patsy came out slow. She was on the near lane, last. But look how she was going! Up to Number Three—and past. Up to Number Five and past. Patsy's nails dug into his arm through the cloth of his jacket.

He could hear himself shouting as Miss Patsy closed up on the dogs in front, Lady Jane and Flying Scot, running neck and neck, fifty yards from home. And Miss Patsy was five yards behind, three yards—inches. Could she do it? Thirty yards, twenty yards, ten yards—they seemed as many miles, an eternity of time, with the world outside well lost. Alfie's voice cracked with excitement. He held his breath and now he could hear Patsy, at his side, shouting wildly.

FOR a moment, as the three dogs went over the line, Alfie thought Miss Patsy had won. Then he heard what everybody was shouting, and realized his misleading angle of vision. "Flying Scot! What a race! Bad luck on Miss Patsy, though."

Alfie couldn't believe it. He stared round, despairingly. There must be some mistake. Five winners out of five his list had given. And now . . . two losers in succession! Was Sam Ogle wrong after all? Weren't the races really fixed? Was this list no more than tips? He wanted to shout, protest—weren't dogs sometimes disqualified?

Then the realization of what he had done seemed to hit him behind the legs. He leaned against the windows. Everybody was swarming out, through the big doors. How philosophical they all looked—but, then, they'd not stolen the firm's money, as he had. That's what it amounted to, didn't it? He'd stolen sixty pounds belonging to Mr. Cookson. And Mr. Cookson would send for the police—no doubt about that.

Alfie watched Patsy draw her coat more closely about her. "Come on," she said. "Let's go."

It was a miserable journey back to Patsy's house. All the way, Alfie tried to screw up enough courage to tell her what he'd done; he couldn't bear to be left alone with the knowledge of what he must face in the morning.

He felt very small, standing here beside her, outside her front gate. He was eighteen again, realizing she was twenty, a whole world away from him.

Patsy took a step backwards, to say good night. "Well, Alfie, thanks for taking me."

He mumbled something, then exclaimed, as she half turned towards the gate: "Miss Patsy! I . . . I've done something terrible. . . ." He told her, in stumbling words, not daring to look in her face, staring down at the pavement.

She listened for only a minute or two, then interrupted, in a voice so strange his eyes went up to her.

"You mean, you've taken sixty pounds of Mr. Cookson's—and lost it all tonight?"

"Yes. You see, I missed the bank. I had to keep the money in my pocket: there were no keys. . . ." He made a gesture towards his pocket, and she shrank away from him.

"You silly little fool!" Her eyes flashed contempt at him, contempt and fear. "Don't you try and implicate *me*! If I'd had the faintest idea, you wouldn't have got me within a mile of you!"

She turned and walked up to the front door. "If you dare to mention my name to Mr. Cookson. . . ."

"Oh, I won't Miss Patsy! I promise. . . ."

She found her key and opened the door. "You'd better not. You're not dragging me into your mess! And if you do, I shall deny every word. Nobody will believe you—a thief. . . ." The door banged, and she was gone.

Alfie turned, bewildered, and forced himself to walk home.

He was early next morning, but even as he walked into the shed and hung up his raincoat, he could hear Mr. Cookson, roaring at somebody over the telephone. Alfie hesitated at the office door. He wanted to turn and run. He was so agitated he didn't even see that the glass of the door was broken. As he went into the office, he stopped with an exclamation. The office was in chaos—drawers pulled out, papers littered everywhere, files torn out. . . .

"Burglars, you fool!" roared Mr. Cookson, slamming down the telephone. "About the only thing they've not broken into is the safe—not that there's much in it. You didn't leave any money about yesterday, did you?"

Alfie stared at the red lines coursing over the Guv'nor's angry face. His eyes were bloodshot. Alfie was frightened, but not too frightened to see this great opportunity. He simply had to explain about the envelope from Mr. Michaelis making him miss the bank, say he'd put the money in the desk—it was all so natural. All he'd got to do was to say "Yes."

And somehow Alfie couldn't say it. Throughout one tearful, sleepless night he had clung to the idea of telling the whole truth, courageously standing up to Mr. Cookson's wrath, police or no police. And, before he could stop himself, here it all was, pouring out of him: the whole truth, every word of it.

Mr. Cookson's mouth opened with astonishment. His bloodshot eyes stared. "You mean you lost sixty quid—every penny! *At the dogs?*"

His voice went shrill. He flopped into a chair. For a moment Alfie thought he was going to have a heart attack. Then he suddenly jerked forward in the chair and swore violently.

"Insurance! I'm not covered—not off the premises! Anything stolen from the office here, yes. . . ."

He stamped round the disordered room, swearing at Alfie, then stopped in front of him. "Sixty pounds lost, just because you took the money off the premises! Oh, no. I'm not losing any sixty pounds!"

HE seized Alfie by the shoulder. "Listen. You never took that money off the premises, did you?"

Alfie stared. "Yes, sir! I put it in my pocket——"

"You didn't, you idiot!" Mr. Cookson roared. "As for the dogs, you never went near the place. You left the money in this desk drawer." He snatched the paying-in book from Alfie's hand. "You never even had any bankings. You weren't *in* this office yesterday—see? You were in the yard, where you usually are, and you don't know anything about what's happened—unless you want the sack. *Do* you? Then keep your trap shut. One whisper of this and you are fired—I'm having nobody dishonest in this firm. Understand?"

Alfie nodded, astonished. "Yes, sir."

"Then out you go, in the yard—and let this be a lesson to you."

"It will be, sir." But Alfie was staring over Mr. Cookson's shoulder, through the glass door of the order office. Miss Patsy had arrived. For a second, as she stood in the stream of morning sunlight, he could see her drawn brows, her tight lips; then she moved into the shadow. Alfie turned, scarcely daring to believe he was free.

Out in the yard, the warming sun struck the smell of creosote from the new fence. Alfie walked quickly, eagerly, to where the foreman stood with Sam Ogle by one of the lorries.

Sam called to him: "Get that message to Miss Patsy? Good boy." He patted Alfie on the shoulder, grinning appreciatively.

Alfie wondered if Sam wanted to marry Miss Patsy. He hoped not. He realized, with surprise, that he liked Sam after all. He would have liked to tell him about last night but, of course, that was all over, finished. He stood there in the sunshine, happily, waiting for the foreman to tell him what work to get on with. THE END

ALONG MY LINE

Continued from page 15

woman the electric spark," he said crossly, "she asked the same damfool question. Faraday replied: 'Of what use is a new-born baby?'"

I decided that my opponent was begging the question and would have done well to stick to writing about Sherlock Holmes instead of getting mixed up in spiritualism. I have yet to be convinced that there is any good in meddling with those "on the other side." If there really is such a place, then its inhabitants should be left there undisturbed.

Brought House Down

Another amusing debate in which I took part was on the subject of birth control. Dr. Martin Linton Smith, Bishop of Hereford, and I spoke against it. Geoffrey Crowther and another defended it. The bishop, tall and splendid in episcopal dress, was not at ease and tried jocularly but heavily to capture the undergraduate spirit. It was really unfortunate when, in an attempt to conjure up his own impeccable youth, he began telling us how he once "rushed from the school tuckshop clutching a large tart." This brought the house down, much to His Grace's embarrassment.

One of my happiest encounters, through the Union, was with G. K. Chesterton, who came to speak at a debate and adopted me as a sort of mascot. Gilbert Chesterton was very kind to me during his stay in Cambridge, and remained a friend in need for many years afterwards.

The first time we talked together he told me that I was far too nervous and too much lacking in self-confidence. It amused him to call me Gilbert the Less, flatteringly assuring me that he was referring only to my physical size.

Chesterton was a magnificent figure in a black broad-brimmed hat and black cloak. Partly as a tribute to him, but also because I was going through the awful phase of taking *fin de siècle* poetry seriously, I got myself a slouch hat and a cloak lined with green silk. These garments, apart from making me look like an exact replica of an advertisement for Sandeman's Port, failed to impress a community in which an absent-minded Girton don had recently been seen going to lectures minus her skirt. The cloak was, in fact, a nurse's cloak, from which I removed the red flannel lining.

I was somewhat put out when I began to realize that this sartorial venture would not earn me half the reputation for eccentricity and aestheticism I had hoped for. After a few weeks of parading about the streets with my cloak and hat brim flapping in the breeze, I changed my tactics—and affected a cloth cap. Caps have since returned to favour at the universities, but in my time at Cambridge they were regarded as the height of eccentricity. I was more than gratified when someone actually mistook me for Sean O'Casey.

One day, my old grandfather came to visit me at college. He was, it may be remembered, no great friend of mine. Age had mellowed him, though. He confessed that he was desperately anxious to see and hear a debate in the Union. So I borrowed a gown and took the old fellow along with me, cautioning him not to let me down by saying to any of my grand friends, "Pleased to meet you."

I managed to get Grandfather seated on a front bench. After the debate, I introduced him to my fellow undergraduates—Lords Pentland, of Trinity College, and Ennismore (now Listowel), of Magdalene College. Grandfather obliged me by shaking hands quite correctly and murmuring: "How do you do?"

The chief clerk of the Union Society, Stanley Brown, taught me a lesson I shall never forget. One day he cashed a £5 cheque for me. A few days later he called me to his office and showed me the cheque with the letters "R.D." written across it. I was badly frightened.

Brown firmly pointed out that a gentleman should never give a cheque unless he is quite certain that it will not bounce. No cheque of mine has bounced since that day.

Last Cambridge Debt

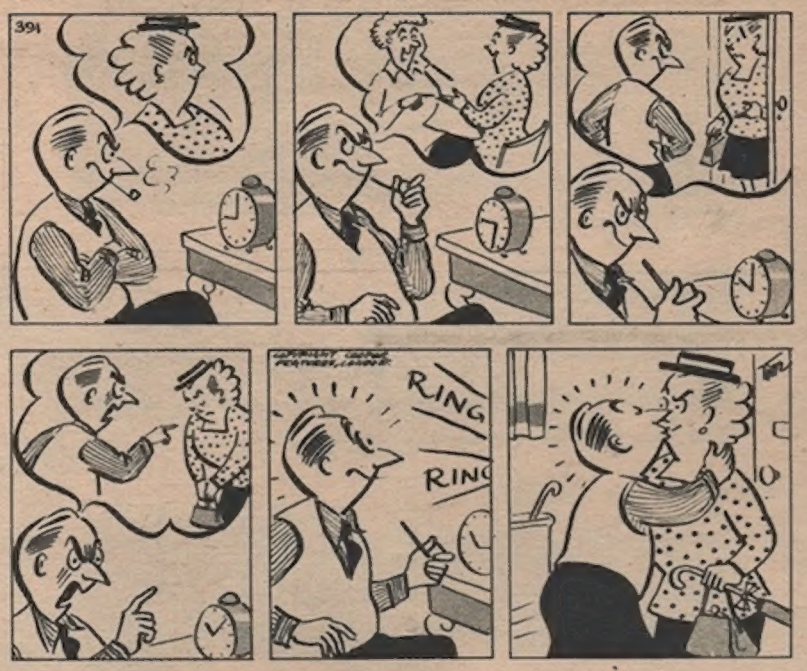
Of course, I was much too extravagant. It was not till I was down from Cambridge for three years that I finished paying off the local tradesmen. One of them I forgot, and when I went to Cambridge last year I called in the pleasantly smelling tobacco shop of Messrs. Ora in Trinity Street, to buy some cigarettes.

As I was about to pay for them, the courteous gentleman behind the counter said: "By the way, Mr. Harding, we have a small account in our books which is, of course, now statute barred. But perhaps you might care to settle it?"

Thus, more than twenty years after I went down, I settled what I hope is my last debt to the honest tradesmen of Cambridge.

NEXT WEEK: Gilbert Harding recalls the practical jokes in his riotous university life

OH, JOHNNY! — *by TIM*



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Other Awards £10 £9 £8 £7 £6

2 of £5 10 of £2-10 25 of £1

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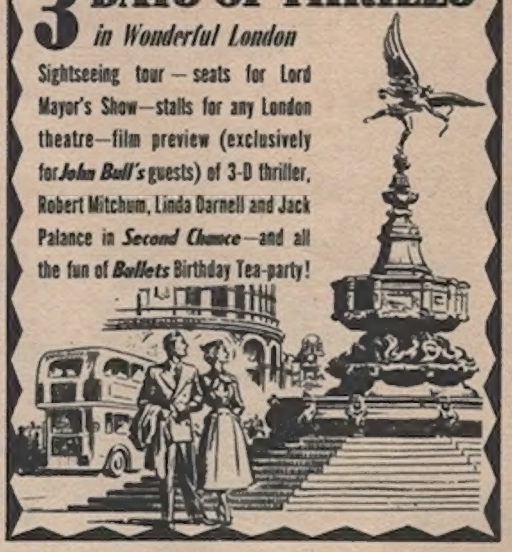

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To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* given. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line — then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

For Britannia
Key To Prosperity
Man, The Mule
Makes Life Sweet
King Coal
Journey Into Space
New Energy
The Silver Lining
Footsore And Weary
At A Terrifying Rate
Wise Father
We Try And Try, But
In The Wrong
Fireworks
Slice Of Luck
Not Fit To Be Seen
On Tiptoe
Feeding The Flames
A Dull Dog
Shock For The Foreman

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

Gave The.....Away
Somebody To .....
In A Child's.....
What ..... Will Do
To Get To The.....
He's Only A....., So

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For ten winners of £2 10s., see *"Bullets" Bulletin*. 50 *Bullets* Season Tickets and 1,500 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

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FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

CLUES for XWORD No. 858

Across

1. It pays to advertise one
2. Baker's apprentice will be expected to sweep up this, among other jobs
4. To battle against a strong one requires both strength and skill
7. Now and again one is referred to in newspapers
8. It seems fitting that learned scholar should have an imposing
11. Running of one is a matter comparatively few men really understand
13. In some circumstances you might be very glad of a spare
14. Forester finds sound piece of timber pretty easy to

Down

1. Is thought of as something low
2. Awkward one is apt to embarrass average fellow
3. This means more to some peoples than to others
5. There's nothing much you can do with poor ones down on their uppers
6. Often prepare us, in a way, for the rigours and discomforts of winter
9. There's often little in it
10. There's hardly a useless ounce on some of them
12. In international affairs, quarrelling is this

£750 CROSSWORD

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Extra Answers to two Clues = 4 Squares, 1s.; to three Clues = 8 Squares, 2s.; to four Clues = 16 Squares, 4s.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated Oct 31.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 8s. entry-fee. Signature below signifies agreement to Rules.

Another £750 Xword coupon for this Contest in next week's issue.

I enclose P.O. value.....

No.....

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
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Closing Postmark MON., OCT. 19

XWORD 853 RESULT

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Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 12 entrants, each of whom receives Summer Surprise Parcel in addition. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up.

RULES

1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of these Contests (*Bullets* in JOHN BULL, dated Nov. 7, and Xwords in JOHN BULL, dated Nov. 14), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, October 24, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,906 result.)

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "Combined," top left-hand corner.

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EX. | 6d.

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1,906

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For practical help with *Bullets* and Crosswords, stick 2½d. stamp on right—this brings you *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated October 24. 719

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